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The Meaning and Message of the Cross

The Meaning and Message of the Cross

A Contribution to Missionary Apologetics

BY

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Him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay.—ACTS 2 : 23.

But far be it far from me to glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.—GAL. 6 : 14.

And, to *make all men see* what *is* the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God . . . according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.—EPH. 3 : 9-11.

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To
All Preachers of the Cross of Christ

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FOREWORD

No phase of thought connected with Christian teaching in our time, more needs to be clarified than that which is connected with the redeeming work of our blessed Lord.

While gifted minds in various periods have profoundly studied the subject, and have written upon it immortal treatises, yet even the best of these at some points are ever in need of restatement. The controversies which have raged concerning the subject have generally left some clouds of obscurity peculiar to all controversy. Language from its inherent weakness as implying too much or too little is so capable of being misunderstood, that any statement made in a given generation requires a somewhat altered phrasing for the generation following. Then the very conceptions of Scripture being often paradoxical or symbolic, carry in them meanings which lie below the surface. The most vital implications of Scripture never clearly appear except to an insight born of deep, spiritual experience; and this element is ever a variable one. To real insight the mysteries of the Divine Word increasingly become open secrets.

In what I have written I have not followed the beaten paths to construct a theory of redemption, but have sought rather by an induction from Scripture teachings to get back to the enduring realities which underlie any theory of permanent value. In the first five chapters I have sought to find the meaning of the Cross of Christ. This necessitated a clearing up of that confusion of thought so widely prevalent, as between the mere human tragedy and crime of the crucifixion, and the Divine Cross of the reconciliation; and the setting forth of the voluntariness of the death of Christ considered as a redeeming achievement, or a graciously judicial transaction, wherein that death becomes the basis of both the forgiveness and the cure of sin. In the latter five chapters I have endeavoured to state the message of the cross as concerns the following matters: individual salvation, the nature and habit of the new life, the redemption of the body, the dynamic of missionary endeavour, and the supreme adaptation of the cross to meet the soul-hunger of all men.

That there are signs of a new accent upon the essential redeeming realities, particularly in Great Britain, promising great values to the church of the future, is certain. Teachers in the Universities, like Fairbairn, Orr, Denney, and Stalker; preachers like MacLaren of Manchester, the late Dr. Dale, and his successor, Dr. Jowett, of Birmingham, G. Campbell

Morgan of both sides the sea, and others; and writers like W. Robertson Nicoll, whose two books, "The Return to the Cross," and "The Church's One Foundation," and his many editorials in *The British Weekly* are signals of protest against current radicalism, all lifting up new standards in behalf of essential truths in danger of being quite discarded.

Dr. James Orr's two works on "Ritschlianism" and his more recent book, "God's Image in Man," and the two late discussions by Professor Denney on "The Death of Christ," and "The Atonement and the Modern Mind," are strong testimonies to the objectivity and the superhumanness of Christ's redemption. Contributed articles on "The Atonement in Modern Thought," which appeared in a symposium in *The Christian World*, London, about five years ago, by such authorities as the late Principal Cave, P. T. Forsyth, R. F. Horton, Marcus Dods, and Frederick Godet, of Switzerland; a notable English work, entitled "The Spiritual Principle in the Atonement," by Rev. J. Scott Lidgett, and "Atonement and Personality," by Canon Moberly, of Oxford, further illustrate the recent renewed emphasis on the redeeming work of Christ as the deepest moral reality in our world.

Among those representing reaction and protest against non-expiatory views of this work stands prominently,—Dr. P. T. Forsyth, Principal of Hack-

ney College, London. At the International Council of Congregationalists, which met in Boston, Mass., in 1899, Dr. Forsyth read a classic paper entitled, "The Cross as the Final Seat of Authority," which produced a profound impression,—an impression peculiarly reassuring to the less radical wing of that council. Dr. Forsyth located that seat in the Cross of Christ, "which is the world's central moral act, which is redemption"; a reality which he placed "back of the Bible (as a canon) the church, the reason, or the human heart." In several noted papers published since by this gifted preacher and writer, a very unusual light has been thrown on the evangelical idea. Some crudities in thought have been exposed, some traditional terms discarded, and distinctions more consonant with an enlightened Christian consciousness have been drawn. I owe special obligation to Dr. Forsyth for conclusions reached and set forth in the following pages.

The ultimate aim of my discussion, as expressed in the last two chapters, has been to show that in Christ's death as a gracious judgment-death—the essential redemption—resides the basis for the central evangelical missionary motive and assurance of the satisfying portion for the heathen. In this light also the ground for the true missionary apologetic so greatly needed by the church of our time is not far to seek. This ground is in the relation of the

unique first judgment which occurred in Christ's cross and its saving potentialities, to the last judgment of mankind. With the divine reconciliation and our implied coöperation with it to actualize its values for our fellow men, the missionary passion is closely connected. Lack of missionary conviction, and want of power over the heathen, other things being equal, will be found due in the end to a lack of appreciation of the reconciling work of Christ and its implicates for His disciples. Missions, like theology, must always "adjust their compass at the cross."

H. C. M.

Boston, Mass., August 1, 1906.

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APPENDIX 255

The Meaning and Message of the Cross

I

THE CROSS DISTINGUISHED FROM THE CRUCIFIXION

But ye . . . killed the Prince of Life whom God raised from the dead.—*Acts* 3: 14.

But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.—*Gal.* 6: 14.

In the correspondence column of Rev. R. J. Campbell of London in *The British Weekly*, an enquirer recently put this question: "I have a Bible class, some of the members of which are fine, thoughtful young fellows. We are studying the life of Christ, and will shortly reach the crucifixion. How can I make clear that the act of crucifying Christ was a *crime*, while at the same time it is *the hope* on which the Christian builds?" And Mr. Campbell, before proceeding to answer, remarks: "This difficulty occurs far more generally than I should have thought."

Lord Beaconsfield is said once to have caricatured

the Atonement in the following terms: "If the Jews had not prevailed upon the Romans to crucify our Lord, what would have become of the Atonement? The immolators were preordained like the victim; and the holy race supplied both. Could that be a crime which secured for all mankind, eternal joy?"

A leading Unitarian minister in New York City, in a sermon preached in his own church a few years since, touching this subject, used these words: "What does atonement mean to the world? It means that the Eternal Father either will not, or cannot receive back to His heart His own erring, mistaken, wandering children, unless the only begotten Son of God is *slaughtered*, and we, as the old, awful hymn has it, 'are plunged beneath this ocean of blood.'"

A supposedly evangelical American minister in his recoil from certain misconceptions of evangelicalism against which he was protesting, once went so far as to say,—"Strictly speaking, the death of Christ was not necessary to human salvation . . . He was not a suicide; He was *murdered*. To say that His death was an indispensable condition to human salvation is to say that God's grace had to call in the aid of murderers in order that it might find a way to human hearts. I am not willing to acknowledge any indebtedness to Judas Iscariot for the forgiveness of my sins."

Here are four persons, widely separated from each other, disturbed, if not shocked, by the same misleading conceptions—persons who stand, as I believe, for a large number of people—who are confused as to terms descriptive of the reconciling death of Christ. The confusion arises mainly from failure to distinguish between two things which in principle widely differ. These two things are the tragedy of the crucifixion, or the public execution of Jesus as expressing the mind of His enemies,—and the cross of the reconciliation representing the mind of our Lord as the means through which the redemption of mankind was to be achieved.

The crucifixion in itself considered was the crime of crimes: it represented sin at its culmination, it showed man at his worst; whereas the cross of the reconciliation, showed God, if we may so speak, at His best; it represented what Dr. Dale characterizes as "the sublimest moment in the moral history of God."

"The Cross of Christ," therefore, as a term which is understood so diversely, is a matter calling for the most careful examination and definite use.

At the very least, the cross represented the point at which God in His saving outreach after a revolted world came into the necessary vicarious relation to it. It was the index of all that was necessary for Him to endure in a voluntary committal of

himself to man's redemption, whatever in its outworking sin and Satan might inflict upon Him. It marks the lengths to which divine love went in vicariously enduring what without it would have fallen upon a lost world. The cross conceived as such a transaction was therefore a very different thing from the human act of crucifixion itself; it represented an entirely distinctive set of relationships.

The reconciliation then is not synonymous with the crucifixion, but the cross considered as the sign of God's redeeming work, in which incarnate Deity dealt with the sin problem, is the reconciliation, the equivalent of what God intended and accomplished in His redeeming mercy to mankind.

The manner in which a divine purpose moving on a higher plane may countervail an evil human purpose moving on a lower plane, and so result in spiritual values not otherwise possible, is expressed in the words of Joseph to his brethren in Egypt, when after their confession to him, Joseph answered, "Fear not; for am I in the place of God? And as for you, ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now, therefore, fear ye not; I will nourish you and your little ones. And he comforted them and spake kindly unto them"[1]—lit. spake to their heart. So God in Christ could and

[1] Gen. 50: 20, 21.

did overrule the very criminality in the crucifixion to a sacred use in behalf of all those who repent and come into filial relation to God.

The distinction I am making, however, as between the cross considered as the index or sign of God's own self-wrought redeeming work and the crucifixion which in itself must ever stand as a sin, the supreme crime of mankind, is fundamental.

The sufferings of Christ then may be looked at as induced by a base human infliction, or they may be considered as voluntarily incurred in the interest of a divine-human righteousness so constituted and acting as that while it would inevitably incur the opposition of sinful men, would yet overcome sin. In this latter sense the agonies of Christ may be regarded as foreordained without in the least condoning the sin of the crucifiers. To this latter conception of what Christ endured those who fall into the error of Lord Beaconsfield seem blind.

Of course, wherever the finite and the infinite come into touch with each other, an element of mystery must always remain: it is however wise to go as far as we can in the reduction of this element. Surely we need not add to the mystery by obscure thinking or vague expression, at points where simplification is possible.

In this study I start then by pointing out that the tragedy of Christ's crucifixion in its awful criminality,

and the cross of the divine reconciliation in its-unique moral majesty, are in character wholly distinct. The crucifixion on the human side was incipient in the sin of the race; and the reconciliation on the divine side, since God is what He is in His long-suffering holiness, was ever eternally in the heart of God waiting to be enacted. It is true that in those last hours upon the cross, the deep, spiritual work of the reconciliation was being consummated *simultaneously* with the crime which Christ's crucifiers were perpetrating upon Him: in spirit, however, and in moral character, the two enactments were at the farthest possible remove from each other. The aim will be to show that the real evangelical idea which requires us to believe that the cross in the divine aspects of it, is the basis of man's reconcilation with God, does not imply that man in the expression of his own passion was *required* to put Christ to death. That the experience of Christ's dying as a historical occurrence, as a public transaction, stood in a certain *relation* to the sin of man, is certain. But that the crime and outrage of the crucifixion as such were necessitated by God, is morally unthinkable. Moreover, so long as the impression prevails that evangelicals maintain the ethical contradiction implied in such utterances as those quoted at the opening of this chapter, it is incumbent upon evangelicals to consider the forms of their teaching anew, ascertain to what extent they are responsible for so

gross misunderstandings and do what they can to overcome consequent revulsions from the gospel.

A concrete picture drawn from the New Testament account of the crucifixion may make clearer the distinction treated in this chapter. In observing the record of the execution of Jesus, a careful reader will notice the varied mental attitudes of the several types of people who stood before the cross. There are at least five classes of people whose attitudes were fundamentally the same; the common crowd, that "passed by wagging their heads"; the Jewish rulers who had connived at the crucifixion; the railing malefactor who rejected Christ; the Roman soldiers, who knew no king but Cæsar; and the half-superstitious beholders, who in the cry of "Eli, Eli," supposed Jesus to be calling for Elias. Each of these five classes appealed alike to Christ to demonstrate that He was really the Messiah, by coming down from the cross and saving His life.

The crowd said, "Ha, Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save Thyself and come down from the cross." [1] The rulers said, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save; let the Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe." [2] The malefactor said, "Art not Thou the Christ? Save Thyself and us." [3]

[1] Mark 15: 29. [2] Mark 15: 31, 32.
[3] Luke [illegible]: 39.

The soldiers said, "If Thou art the king of the Jews, save Thyself." [1] The superstitious said, "Let be; let us see whether Elijah cometh to take Him down." [2] Each of these, observe, in effect said to Jesus, "*Save Thyself.*"

These all saw chiefly the tragedy of the crucifixion, they supposed the cross in that sense to be finality in the life of Jesus. Unless Jesus should use His miraculous power to take Himself off the scaffold,—supernaturally keep Himself alive,—they would have no faith in Him; the demonstration to their minds would be complete that He was not what He claimed to be, the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel, the Saviour of the world.

Now, over against these five classes, there is a single shining exception, of one whose position radically differed from that of these types just noted, and he expresses himself differently: The dying penitent was the first and only one among all that spoke out at the execution of Jesus, who did not say, "*save Thyself.*" He did cry, "*Save me.*" "And he said Jesus"; that is, he used the saving name, with discernment of who and what He really was. He and he alone saw there was something deeper transpiring than the crucifiers recognized; that Jesus really was allowing the sanctuary of His body to be taken down, in order that it might be rebuilt. He discerned that if Jesus would

[1] Luke 23: 37. [2] Mark 15: 36.

save others from the spiritual necessities of the case, He could not "save Himself"; He must endure what sin would impose on Saviourhood; he saw that Jesus really was "the King of Israel," "the chosen of God," "the good shepherd," laying down His life for the sheep, so laying it down that He "might take it again." This penitent was the first and only one at the crucifixion that saw a whole new kingdom lying beyond the impending death of Jesus, of which he might become a member. That kingdom, however, was to be built upon the divine side of what was going on. He saw at least in principle the coming resurrection, and the glorious possibilities involved in it; it was "the hope of Israel." Doubtless he was spiritually, preternaturally endued with the insight of one on the borderland of the celestial world; and thus saw both sides of the crucifixion event, the basely human and the nobly divine. But he especially saw with great vividness the reality of the reconciliation, saw it from the heaven-side, as God sees it—as we all should learn to see it;—and he exclaimed in that model prayer, marked with its peculiar illumination, "Jesus, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom"[1];—a kingdom conditioned on what was now being borne by Christ. This man and this one only, so far as we know, of all that stood about the Christ on Calvary, apprehended the reconciliation, God's

[1] Luke 23 : 42.

act,—an act as both deliberate and permissive,—the reconciliation as distinguished from man's criminality in the crucifixion. There was probably not a disciple that stood there, not one of the women, not even the Saviour's own mother Mary, that would not, if possible, in their sheer inability to perceive what God was achieving, have prevented the completion of Christ's purpose on the cross. As yet, none of these disciples understood as they did afterwards in the light of Pentecost—the cross of the redemption. This dying man so unfortunately stigmatized in the common epithet, as "the dying thief," is really the ideal penitent. He and he only, had the vision of the cross of reconciliation. He alone looked beyond the tragic horrors of the crucifying deed. He was absorbed with the larger reality, that Christ, despite man's treatment of Him, was really bearing away the sin of the world, preparatory to a spiritual kingdom which lay beyond the climacteric of His dying hour. The penitent sought membership in that kingdom, a privilege of grace instantly assured by the reply of Jesus, "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." [1]

Says Professor Denney, "for the modern mind, as for the ancient, the attraction and the repulsion of Christianity are concentrated at the same point; the cross of Christ is man's only glory, or it is his final

[1] Luke 23: 43.

stumbling block." It is our fervent hope that if we can justify the distinction with which we have started, we may help to remove a common cause of stumbling and strengthen the motive to "glory," as did the chief of the apostles "in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." [1] For assuredly, the cross of our glorying is not the Crucifixion-Crime.

[1] Gal. 6 : 14.

II

SOURCES OF CONFUSION RESPECTING THE CROSS

Not in wisdom of words lest the cross of Christ should be made void.—1 *Cor.* 1 : 17.

Doubtless a fruitful occasion of the confusion respecting the cross is the ambiguity which has attended the theological use of the term "death," as applied to Christ. A common assumption is that this term in the New Testament is narrowly used in the sense of mere mortal dissolution ensuing upon the separation of the soul from the body. Jesus on the physical side of His being of course was flesh and blood, and the inference is natural that when His persecutors transfixed Him to the wood, His constitution, being under peculiar strain, would give way, as naturally as would that of any ordinary man. A death thus physically inflicted and limited is conceived to be the death which Jesus died for the sins of the world. Says one, "When sin came into man's being, it affected his body as well as his soul, and so there is some kind of connection between sin and death. This connection in the Scriptures is always presupposed by the reconciliation, and so when Christ redeemed mankind He tasted that form of

mortal death which is inseparably connected with sin."

Of course, on the basis of the conception just stated, the "mortal death" of Jesus is regarded as having a peculiar distinction and moral value from the fact that it was the death of an unfallen one linked to Deity, that it involved so abject humiliation, and that it was patiently endured; but taken as it stands, the conception is inadequate and misleading.

In one of the sorry caricatures of the evangelical conception quoted in the former chapter, it will be recalled that the author of the sentiment referred to held that the death of Jesus was *either* that of *murder* or of *suicide.* It would seem not to have entered the mind of the author of those forced alternatives, that there was a *third* sort of death possible to Christ; namely, *the experience of spiritual death,* including of course physical dying also, that He was "pouring out His *soul* unto death," [1] that the Father was making "His *soul* an offering for sin"; [2] which certainly was a death far enough from suicide, because it was a death which Christ had original authority to incur, as well as to overcome in resurrection power.

This third form of death also, as a basis on which men could fix their faith as a vicarious work, was in character far enough from the death of murder,

[1] Isa. 53 : 12. [2] Isa. 53 : 10.

which indeed Christ's enemies designed to inflict upon Him. Of course, the error in the sentiment above quoted, lies in the supposition that the only death to be thought of in the case of Jesus is the death by "murder"—at the most mere mortal dying,—whereas the reconciling death as the basis of evangelical reliance for salvation was far above this in character, and is quite misunderstood by the objector quoted. Of the real nature of this death, I will speak in a later chapter.

The traditional Roman Catholic theology has been the most fruitful source of much of the confusion referred to. From the beginning, Romanism has materialized Christianity. It has put large emphasis upon the physical dying of Jesus. It has correspondingly misunderstood and minimized the resurrection, and the actual redemption organically connected with it. In all Roman Catholic churches the central object is the crucifix. In its great cathedrals like Cologne, one may behold not only full-length wax-figure representations of Jesus stretched upon the cross, but also imitations of the dead Saviour lying in the sepulchre, every wound inflicted by the torturing instruments, oozing and red with gore. To one who apprehends the real character of the atonement, these representations are gross and revolting.

In the paintings of Tissot, although they are the

expressions of a spirit deeply influenced by the moral power of Christ's death, the emphasis is overwhelmingly upon the mere tragedy, which the artist so vividly conceived. There is little suggestion of that which is really the mediating work itself; that is, of the work which God intended and which Christ was enacting behind the crucifixion. This work was deeply in the invisible and spiritual realm, impossible of portrayal upon a canvas; it has to be seen by the conscience and the insight of faith; it must be painted on the moral retina of the soul, and can never be externalized to the natural eye.

Romanism commonly makes its appeal to the senses. The Mass as the perversion of an original truth is something strangely calculated to kindle the imagination, that it may sense anew the literal physical dying of Jesus. In the "elevation of the host," the observers, instead of being taught to die daily with Christ to the flesh-life, are trained to see Christ Himself repeatedly and dramatically lifted up as on the tree before them. By the priest's blessing, the bread and the wine are supposedly transformed into the literal body and flowing blood of Christ, dying before the people, then eaten and drunk by them in a materialized appropriation of the body of the Lord. In all this there is a sad perversion of teaching respecting the real nature of

the divine achievement which the apostles apprehended in the cross of the reconciliation, and also of its legitimate appropriation and assimilation in the believer's spiritual life.

In the famous Passion Play enacted every ten years in Oberammergau, Bavaria, we have a marked illustration of the Roman Catholic accentuation of the error here referred to. That dramatic exhibition is not adapted to teach the real mediating work of Christ as the Scriptures teach it. It is the dramatization of the tragedy. It pictures forth the public execution of the innocent "man of Nazareth." No doubt there is a deep sincerity in the spirit of the extraordinary participants, who spend much of their lives in study to represent in a most realistic way the crucifixion event. I would not presume to say that those who so profoundly meditate upon the great occurrence, and who act their part in it with such artistic skill, may not themselves by faith grasp the underlying mediating fact. An intelligent observer of the play may also bring to the occasion a right apprehension of the work of Christ itself, and so may get profit out of the dramatization. My contention, however, is that the play in itself is adapted to emphasize not the reconciliation but the tragedy. Its appeal is to the sensibilities. It is essentially impressional, chiefly serving to awaken sympathy with the innocent sufferer, rather

than conviction of sin and the appropriate repentance for it.

And yet while thus showing the over-accentuation of the tragedy side of the cross, I do not forget that there was a tragedy in connection with this supreme event, the most consummate tragedy of history. As divinely foreseen, God purposed to use it for its historical and impressional value, to startle the world into attention, to compel reflection concerning the deep iniquity of sin and what it cost the Lord to redeem from it, and to warm the affections towards a divine beneficence so absolute. In the order of the world of which we form a part—a world into which sin has come, a world existing under a redemptive economy—God saw it to be necessary that sin should be unrestrained up to a certain limit, that it should have opportunity publicly to disclose its own unreason and virus. It must be given opportunity to work itself out to self-revealed cruelty and absurdity. It was doubtless in some way necessary that the public divine dealing with the sin-problem should manifest itself in immediate connection with—right over against—the demonstrated turpitude of moral evil which the crucifixion of the innocent Christ illustrated. Sin required to be set forth as deicide; and men needed to be convinced that even for a sin so atrocious there was a pardon. In no less dramatic way could the

utter contrast between holiness and sin, and at the same time the adequacy of divine grace to overcome the breach, be made to stand out so impressively. Hence the strangely unique tragedy. God can make use even of the forms in which Satan's lies express themselves. So He uses the very moral shock, the sensation caused by the historic crucifixion-crime to arrest attention, to impress the world and all worlds in the interest of His holy grace. Thus there seems to have been not a physical, but a moral necessity, that on God's part the martyr-principle—the innocent suffering for the guilty even—should be utilized, in order that the world might be gripped by a new and diviner power. In the logical development of the evil of American slavery, it was morally necessary that such an one as John Brown (and a great multitude of others of whom he was the forerunner), should lay down his life. Brown himself with deep insight is said naively to have remarked on the way to the scaffold that he was "worth more to hang than for anything else."

The issue of our Civil War working as the deep cure of the evil which brought on the war, could not reach its established result until President Abraham Lincoln, the embodiment of all that was most opposite to the enslaving-principle, fell a martyr to freedom.

Said Hugh Latimer to Ridley when bound to the

stake at Oxford in 1555, as they both were about to be burned, "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man! We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as I trust shall never be put out." "The blood of the martyrs" is always "the seed of the church." This would seem to be morally essential to a public power that would prove curative of evil. So while the work of Christ in its mediating element is far deeper than the efficacy of mere martyrdom, it nevertheless makes use of the principle of martyrdom on the way to its proper goal. It is in this way that the crucifixion itself in all its revolting character, blackest of crimes though it is, is overruled and utilized by God,—since man would perpetrate the deed,—to shock the world into realization of its own baseness on the one hand, and of God's infinite compassionateness on the other.

Thus it is that Christ, and Him even as crucified, when taken in its whole meaning, is both "the wisdom of God and the power of God." While no one could say that the crucifixion of Christ, considered as a crime, could be made the *basis* of salvation, yet we must say, as above explained, that the crucifixion has a most effective bearing in bringing men into saving union with Christ. For it needs ever to be remembered that the reconciliation must be wrought not only in consistency with the ethical nature of God, but in such a form as to impress human nature in the

simple, that something unparalleled has occurred —something moreover that will not be put by—and this is just what did occur in the experience of the Divine Man of Calvary. Such a spectacle is adapted to reach and melt the heart of the sinner, and unless he has been strangely sophisticated to awaken in him a new spontaneity of righteousness.

A Bechuanaman in South Africa, after listening in astonishment to a graphic description of the crucifixion, exclaimed,—"Jesus, away from there; that's my place."

This new spontaneity is effected by the Divine Spirit through the vision thrown up against the background of sin's turpitude of the innocent sufferings of Christ, phenomena peculiarly adapted to accomplish the result. This divinely pathetic spectacle is an unspeakably more effective moral power than the imposition of any mere legally ethical constraint on the human spirit could have been. Says President Edwards, "In legal humiliation, men are brought to despair of helping themselves: in evangelical, they are brought voluntarily to deny and renounce themselves; in the former, they are subdued and forced to the ground; in the latter, they are brought sweetly to yield, and freely, with delight to prostrate themselves at the feet of God."

There is undoubtedly a divinely intended value in the power to impress the sensibilities which the event

of Christ's dying, in just the manner He did, constituted; it acts as a mysterious public phenomenon, a magnet to attract the curious, to move the careless, to awaken discrimination against sin, and at length to win the grateful devotion of the penitent. The phenomena accompanying the crucifixion, the satanic cruelty, the darkened heavens, the earthquake shock, the opened sepulchres, and the rent temple vail, just at that juncture of the world's concentrated public life, made the crucifixion for all time the sensation of the ages. It compels attention. This peculiar execution wrought in no such way as the crucifiers supposed it would, namely, to reduce Christ to oblivion. It rather exalted Him into notice; it tended in the retrospect to move all men, as well as Israel, to "look upon Him whom they pierced." [1] But even so, the intended value in all this sensational potency to rouse the attention of mankind was the result of overruling wisdom and power; no thanks to the crucifiers. In no sense was the power of this dramatic transaction due to the purpose of the murderers of Jesus: they had no such thought. Sin is too short-sighted for that; in the end it always o'erleaps itself. In this case particularly it went wide of its own intentions; and so God, and not Satan, reaped a benefit from the ghastly deed. Sin in its own over-doing killed itself. God took up the effect of the suicide

[1] Zech. 12 : 10; John 19 : 37.

and turned it as only He could turn it,—to the glory of His righteous and gracious government forever.

The death described by the mere tragedy, however, is by no means the deeper death which Jesus died. It was not the crucifixion *per se*, the mere Roman form of public execution in itself which constituted the reconciliation—that substance of divine dealing with sin—which was contemplated "from before the foundation of the world." That mediating death which Christ underwent was something vastly deeper down than a form of human execution. It was primarily an immaterial and spiritual experience, the result of His voluntary assumption of the world's sin and guilt, including that of His own tormentors.

No mere dramatization like that of the Passion Play, therefore, could set forth the reconciliation itself, simply because that which was then and there enacted, while objectified, was in the main invisible, involving deep spiritual elements and relationships. The chief factors in this achievement working in a death grapple with the sin-problem lay deeper than sight. These factors were the holiness of God, and the measureless love and grace of God working harmoniously in the divine government. The crucifiers indeed knew not what they did, much less did they know what the Christ was doing; meanwhile, even as they tortured, He was redeeming.

But great as is the mistake of the Roman Catholic

Church in fostering the unfortunate confusion respecting the nature of Christ's death, yet Protestantism cannot be said to be wholly free from blame; for the language of a materialized conception concerning Christ's work has often been used by Protestants in a misleading way, and yet prevails, despite the constant misunderstanding of the terms used. Doubtless this tendency is the harder to correct, because of the very depth and preciousness of evangelical experiences so deeply cherished. These experiences are rooted in the sense of the vicariousness of Christ's dying work, and so they have become associated closely with the shedding of His blood, in some meaning of this term. With many, so true and deep is the consciousness that their sins have been purged away by the sacrificial work of Christ, that to them it is the very physical element itself that flowed from Christ's wounds, which cleanses. The terminology of the Scriptures in the emphasis it places upon "the blood of the covenant" [1] is strong and repeated. It should, however, not be forgotten that in a book so highly symbolic as the Bible, many of its terms, and especially those which have been brought over into the New Testament from the ceremonialism of Jewish sacrifices, need to be explained. As between the reality and the shadow, there is always danger of confusion. Scripture language is not always self-defining. There is therefore

[1] Heb. 10 : 29.

need of thought and careful speech in interpretation. Take, for example, such a passage as that in Hebrews 9 : 13—"For if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the (an, or His) eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." From this text the inference is hastily drawn that whereas "the blood of bulls and of goats" only ceremonially purified sin, yet the blood of Christ—the physical element—since it is Christ's blood, acts as the real purifying agent. Thus reasoning, a habit most devout and well-meaning easily follows to magnify the blood itself.

But suppose now we carefully notice the two members of the antithesis in the text just quoted. The first member is "the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer"; the second member is "the blood of Christ" *plus* all that is embraced in the accompanying qualifying statements; including of course Christ's life for which the blood stood,[1] that is, the second member is "the blood of Christ *who through His eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God.*" Then the teaching is not that the blood of Christ, in itself considered, really accomplished what the blood of bulls and of goats only ceremonially expressed;

[1] Lev. 17 : 11.

but that the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice consisted in the fact that He "through His eternal Spirit offered Himself (even unto death) without spot to God," of which offering, His blood—emblem of His life—was the speaking sign.

Should we, however, be oblivious of the fact that multitudes not early accustomed to evangelical teaching, and uninitiated in its peculiar experience, are more likely to be repelled from Christianity than won to it, when in our interpretations we fail to take pains to distinguish between the physical element and the symbolic import of Christ's blood? Now when it is explained that the language of the New Testament, so abounding in terms like "the precious blood of Christ," [1] "the blood of the lamb," [2] "the blood of an eternal covenant," [3] etc., is speaking in symbol, really meaning that the sacrifice of Christ was the surrender of the *most precious life*, a surrender to *the very uttermost* in unspared devotion, *even unto blood and death*, and that back of the blood was a *great moral recognition* of the deepest death which sin necessitated; and that Jesus in His offering even unto blood was in principle owning the penal judgment which sin and guilt deserved, the Scripture language filled with a richer content, is highly ennobled, while nothing of value is lost.

Of course we would give no occasion for any to

[1] 1 Peter 1 : 19. [2] Rev. 12 : 11. [3] Heb. 13 : 20.

speak lightly of the blood of Christ, for to us it is charged with the profoundest and most hallowed meanings. Those who can thus speak of this most sacred of all emblems have given away far more in the realm of moral reality than they suppose; and they are making it easier for the enemies of the real cross to blaspheme. To any who are in doubt about the sanctity of this particular Biblical symbol, as involving the devotement of the divine life for men, a deeper study is commended. All who would help to the appreciation and acceptance of evangelical truth should go deeply into the realities concerning Scripture sacrifices which underlie the terms employed.

III

THE NEW TESTAMENT USE OF CRUCIFIXION TERMS

For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.—1 *Cor.* 2 : 2.

In view of what has been said, it is now necessary to give our attention to some particular scriptures which doubtless have occurred to the reader bearing upon the subject in hand. These passages at first sight may seem to present an objection to the distinction I have been drawing between the crucifixion in itself considered and the divine achievement of the reconciliation.

In his first Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter i, verses 23, 24, Paul declares, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling block and unto Gentiles foolishness, but Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God, because the foolishness of God is wiser than men ; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." In chapter ii, and verse 2 of this same Epistle, the Apostle says, that in his ministry among the Corinthians, he "determined not to know anything save Jesus Christ, and Him (as) crucified." And to the Galatians, in chapter vi, verse 14, Paul

wrote, "Far be it from me to glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

I grant that at first sight it does appear as if in the passages quoted, the Apostle was magnifying the crucifixion itself as being the basis of human salvation. But we shall see this is far from the truth. In each of the passages referred to, Paul is dealing with a difficult paradox, in which he takes note of the twofold aspect of that mysterious event, the death on the cross. In one aspect of it, he recognizes the humiliation—a public historic event indeed—involved in Christ's endurance of the crucifixion; but in another aspect of it, he takes note of what God intended in permitting and overruling the evil in that event, and which, because of His own divine working back of all, eventuated in the Moral Achievement of Christ's Cross.

As to the first of these passages, observe, that Paul concedes that the preaching of the cross, as he understood it, was a paradox hard to receive for both Jews and Gentiles: that to the one it was a stumbling block, and to the other it was foolishness, while to the spiritually initiated, the Christ who *had been crucified* was both the wisdom of God and the power of God. What Paul here really is magnifying is the Messiah manifested in the form of self-sacrificing humiliation, as submitting even to ignominious death,

while doing his deepest work, rather than as one authenticated by pomp and circumstance as the Jews expected. As a sign, the Jews were unable to accept this; and as a mark of wisdom, such a manifestation was utterly confounding to the proud Greeks. So what Paul is defending is the paradox of a humiliated sacrificial Messiah, as a manifestation of God's moral power and of His divine wisdom. It is plain, therefore, that in this passage the Apostle was not justifying crucifixion, *per se;* he rather took that crucifixion as the sign of an unparalleled public self-abasement to which God in Christ submitted for man's sake.

So with reference to the second of Paul's declarations before us. In saying that, he "determined not to know anything," among the Corinthians, "save Jesus Christ and Him crucified," he is similarly emphasizing not the element in the crucifixion which is a palpable crime, but that paradoxical objective sign which Christ's peculiar humiliation constituted. The world's Redeemer was one who gave Himself to the deepest self-renunciation, in order that by so doing He might save and exalt lost men; and so, in the personal allusions of the Apostle which follow, he avows his fellowship with that kind of a Saviour: "And I was with you in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your

faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."[1] The emphasis here clearly is upon the paradox of the lowliness of the agent of salvation, and the divine overruling purpose concerning it, and not upon any virtue in the crucifixion wrong itself. The divineness of this paradox is the more apparent also, as we follow the Apostle in his reasoning: "Although this looks like foolishness to men, yet we speak wisdom among them that are full grown, yet a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world who are coming to nought: but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that has been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory: which none of the rulers of this world hath known: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory."[2]

Then conceivably, in the light of such a conclusion, there might have been a generation of men unlike the Jews or the Greeks, who instead of stumbling at the self-humiliation of Jesus, would have understood and appreciated it. But such a virtue as this was one "which none of the rulers of this world hath known," controlled as they were by a spirit so foreign to divine grace and wisdom. A really wise generation would have appreciated the Redeemer's attitude towards it in His lowly form, as

[1] 1 Cor. 2 : 5. [2] 1 Cor. 2 : 9.

being God's Son, "the heir," and would have accepted Him as such, and not have slain Him. And if this is so, then that notion of wisdom which put Jesus of Nazareth to death, was really the height of folly as well as sin. The crucifixion *per se* was of the folly of the world, and not of true wisdom except in so far as it was over-ruled by God for public impressional purposes. The wisdom that is "perfect," "mature," "full-grown," is in complete antithesis to all that entered into the motive to destroy Christ. This is the wisdom which belongs to the cross of the redemption, which we are distinguishing from the folly and sin which attach to the crucifixion.

But further, the real cross of the reconciliation implied as lying behind what appeared in the crucifixion, is also among "the deep things," as well as the wise things of God. No superficial, hasty thought can ever hope to apprehend the real nature of what was transpiring between God and His universe on the cross. The most careful comparison of Scripture with Scripture, and the profoundest reflection under the guidance of the illumining Spirit of God, are necessary to afford us the insight required. Accordingly, the Apostle further says,—"For who among men knoweth the things of a man save the Spirit of a man which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God."[1]

[1] 1 Cor. 2 : 11.

The wisdom which can penetrate to this is "revealed through the Spirit," the Spirit which "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."[1] Taking men as they are, however,—because they would not otherwise learn the true wisdom,—God permitted His only begotten to be put to death by their sin, knowing that its reflex action would come back upon mankind for its good. God in Christ submitted even to that, that even so in the end, the real divine wisdom might be learned. Thus the Father went to all needful lengths in becoming responsible for the burthen of sin; and so the palpable public crime of the crucifixion was permitted right alongside of the mediating work which the divine holiness and love were achieving. Surely then, the fact that Paul was taking account of the crucifixion in the divine economy, in no way implies that he was approving that iniquity, or that he considered it in itself the basis of human salvation, albeit God might use its effects in over-ruling power. In His purpose to save, God was willing to *submit to* the crucifixion of His son, and make use of its impressional value, but because of a love that was deathless, rather than because of dependence upon any internal efficacy in such a wrong, or want of horror at its baseness.

Then [redacted] to the third utterance of the Apostle,

[1] 1 Cor. 2 : 10.

wherein he says, "Far be it from me to glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," we need to study carefully the context, in order to grasp the meaning. Paul is protesting against the errors which were being introduced into the Galatian church by certain Judaizing teachers. These teachers were insisting that the Galatian Christians should return to the economy of Moses, and so to the custom of circumcision, and Paul remonstrates by saying, "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh,"—*i. e.*, by gaining proselytes,—"compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ . . . but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh." [1] Now as over against this desire of the Judaizing teachers, so to win proselytes as to avoid shame on account of the cross, Paul exclaims, "Far be it from me to glory save in that very thing of which the Judaizers are ashamed." [2] He is thinking of what that cross really stands for. That cross on the divine side of its meaning represents the most emphatic protest on Christ's part against the flesh or the self-principle, which ruled these Judaizing teachers. It was the working of this principle of the flesh which had driven Paul's Lord "as a lamb to the slaughter," [3] which had animated Satan, and prompted all the sin in the world from Adam

[1] Gal. 6: 12, 13. [2] Gal. 6: 14. [3] Isa. 53: 7.

down. In going to His cross Christ wholly set at naught and despised this flesh principle: He had regard only for the will of the Father. Paul also, who had now become one with Christ, abhorred that same flesh principle; and so he exclaimed, "Far be it from me to glory in anything except that which represents the opposite of that principle," namely, the voluntariness of Christ's sacrifice. He wished himself wholly cut off from the principle, and the principle wholly cut off from him, which could drive Jesus to such an end. He could do this by heartily uniting himself with Christ. This he did by identifying himself with the lot of Christ, and so was crucified with Him. He would rather die with Christ under the persecution of that flesh-principle which put Jesus to death, than live under the animus of such a principle. Moreover, through so dying with Christ, Paul found himself strangely alive with the risen Lord. This was the subjective paradox in Christian experience corresponding to the objective paradox in Christ's cross. The cross, as thus explained, was the agency of a double process in Paul's own moral state, whereby the world's hold on him was destroyed, and his own grasp on the world was relinquished. Hence he gloried in it. Such a view of the moral import of Christ's cross is wholly hostile and fatal to the governing principle of this foolish world and to the entire Satanic philosophy. Such a view also in spirit

is the very opposite of any supposed glorying in the crucifixion-crime in itself considered.

In the light of these interpretations covering the twofold aspects of the cross, I trust it will be clear that the crucifixion considered as a human crime, and the cross of the reconciliation considered as a divine moral achievement, in the Pauline thought, are highly antithetical to each other.

Passing now from the specific texts just considered, I call attention to the fact that running throughout the Scriptures, there is a principle asserted or implied, respecting the way in which divine redemption deals with this matter of sin, which goes far to explain the peculiar way in which the New Testament emphasizes the value of the cross, as accomplishing the very opposite of what Christ's enemies intended. The principle to which we refer is that redemption, when finished, *turns the tables* upon sin. In the conflict between Christ, "the seed of the woman," and Satan, the adversary of mankind, the victory which Christ is winning is in itself so transcendent an achievement, that it is uniformly represented in the Bible as not only a conquest, but "*more than*" a conquest. Redemption is something not only adequate to meet the fallen situation in sin which Satan has occasioned, but in its very nature it goes further; it accomplishes its utter rout and overthrow. This surplusage of triumph in the

Scriptures is expressed in many forms. For example, through the entrance of sin into the world, Satin is said to *bruise the heel* of the woman's seed, but the heel of that same seed is represented as *crushing the serpent's head.*[1]

The Messianic triumph foreseen in the one hundred and eighteenth Psalm, is expressed in these words: —"The stone which the builders refused, is become the headstone of the corner." In the parable of the vineyard which had been entrusted to Jewish husbandmen, given in the gospels, Christ is foretelling the certain retribution about to fall on the unfaithful Israel. He concludes His teaching with this direct application drawn from the Psalm just quoted: "Did ye never read in the Scriptures the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes?" And in the discourse of the Apostle Peter before the Jewish council respecting the healing of the impotent man at the temple gate, the Apostle says, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even in Him doth this man stand here before you whole.[2] He is the stone which was set at nought of the builders, which was made the head of the corner," . . . "he

[1] Gen. 3 : 15.

[2] Acts 4 : 10.

that falleth on this stone shall be broken to pieces; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust." [1]

In the Book of Esther, a book which celebrates the triumphs of the providence of God over the pagan alternative for providence, namely, the notion of fatality or "luck," we have a dramatic yet historic presentation of the principle referred to. In the evil plot of Haman, there is a cunning plan wherein Mordecai is to be humiliated, the King manipulated, and the entire house of Israel throughout all the provinces of Persia, annihilated. The scheme moves on for a time with apparent success. It would seem as if the very fates were conspiring to assist the nefarious schemes of Haman the Agagite, descendant of Ammon, Israel's old enemy, when suddenly the divine counterplot enters and everything turns. The principle involved in the outcome finds expression in the first verse of the ninth chapter, "whereas it was *turned to the contrary.*" "Now in the twelfth month, that is the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have rule over them: (*whereas it was turned to the contrary* that the Jews had rule over them that hated them), the Jews gathered

[1] Matt. 21: 44.

themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the King Ahasuerus, to lay hands on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people."[1] Not the fates, according to the pagan idea, but providence according to God's plan for the world, rules in behalf of His people. Accordingly, in the dénouement, we see the tables completely turned, with shame and confusion resting upon the head of the wily conspirator. Mordecai is mounted upon the King's charger as "the man whom the King delighteth to honour,"[2] while the jealous but now humiliated Haman trudges in the street, the mere herald of the hated primate now preferred above himself. Esther, instead of being devoted to death, becomes especially exalted in the palace. Haman and his sons are hanged on the gallows prepared for Mordecai, and the very "lucky" day fixed upon by Haman's superstition, becomes for him the "unluckiest" day possible. That day instead of signalizing the destruction of the Jews, marks their preservation, and the two days, next following the fourteenth and fifteenth, are substituted for Haman's fateful thirteenth day of "luck." These days became thereafter days of feasting, exultation, and the giving of gifts. To accentuate so divine a reversal of a supposedly *unalterable* decree, a new and signifi-

[1] Esther 9 : 1–3. [2] Esther 6 : 11.

cant feast was accordingly instituted, and set in the Jewish calendar. This feast was called "The Feast of Purim," a feast which takes its name from the Hebrew word "*pur*," meaning "the lot," "*purim*" being the plural form of the word, meaning "lots." Haman had been casting the lot over and over again testing all the days throughout a twelve-month, that he might superstitiously hit upon the auspicious day favoured by his pagan deities for the consummation of his diabolical scheme to exterminate the Jews. The very period indicated by the fates is henceforth set apart in the custom of the Jews as a festival occasion, *in worthy moral derision* of the futility of Haman's superstitious dependence upon the pagan idea of luck. What is the lesson here, but this, that mere "luck" (if indeed there were any such thing in the world) can work no injury to the people of God, because they are rather the children of His providential care. This "Feast of Purim" then was in a lofty sense an *ironical* feast, properly so, upon the principle that when God vindicates His people, He does it in such fashion as to confound their adversaries and His. He "*turns the tables*" on them; He *alters* the iniquitous decree; He avenges *speedily* "His elect," "and yet He is long-suffering over them." [1]

In the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans is

[1] Luke 18: 7, 8.

wrought out a marked antithesis between the deep ruin of the race which came by "the one man," Adam, and the surpassing redemption which was achieved by "the one man," Christ, "the last Adam." It is stated with fivefold repetition that the grace of Christ is "much more" than adequate, "*much more*" *than sufficient.*[1] Redemption is more than restoration, it is glorification. "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound," and always does, if God's grace be given its way. The grace of Christ has always a redundance of resource. That great pæan of the soul's triumph in Christ which is sung in the eighth of Romans, moves on with ever increasing volume till the Apostle at length drops all standards of comparison, and in one exultant burst exclaims, "Nay, in all these things we are *more than conquerors* through Him that loved us."[2]

But perhaps the most decisive passage of all in support of the view I am advocating respecting the outcome of the cross as an *unexpected reversal* of the tables upon Christ's enemies, is *Paul's utterance* found in the fourteenth and fifteenth verses of the second chapter of his Epistle to the Colossians. The Apostle is speaking of Christ's work on the cross as the basis on which we have forgiveness of sins. He thus characterizes that basal work of Christ; "Having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that

[1] Rom. 5, 9, 10, 15, 17, 20. [2] Rom. 8 : 37.

was against us, which was contrary to us and He hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to His cross." From the point of view of those who supposed that in crucifying Jesus they had made an end of His power, could anything be more surprising and disappointing? The words quoted represent Christ in the very moment when His person is being transfixed to the wood, as Himself driving invisible nails through the invisible indictment of condemnation into an invisible cross, and so annulling the judgment against human sin, making it possible to forgive the very sin that executed Him. Paul uses the symbolism of the crucifixion to describe the victory of Christ over that crucifixion. How consummate and divine this mastery! It *turns the edge* of all Christ's opponents contemplated and makes their supposed conquest His own.

But as if this were not enough, the Apostle adds: "Having despoiled (or stripped off) the principalities and the powers He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it," *i. e.*, triumphing in that same cross. This language implies that just at the moment when the crucifiers were saying, "Aha, we have you at last," Christ Himself in the great reserve of His power was unexpectedly flanking their movement, wresting their supposed victory from them, and so despoiling of all it expected every principality of evil in the whole Satanic realm. This

victory was peculiarly recognized by the world of unseen spiritual intelligences in both heaven and hell. To them the disclosure was made "openly," more demonstrably than to us. In His ascension they saw Him lead His own captivity captive, drawing a host of the vanquished in His train. Hence, the outburst in the prophetic vision of the Psalm, "God is gone up with a shout, Jehovah with the sound of a trumpet." [1] It was the triumph of this cross of the redemption,—the heaven-side of the reality,—the crucifixion "*turned to the contrary*" which the spiritual intelligences saw. For the full manifestation of this we wait. The divine attitude respecting it all is expressed in that dramatic Psalm, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision." [2]

The principle which I have pointed out thus construed makes all the difference with the term, "the cross of Christ." The term is one of *high irony*, used in *holy and sublime derision*, the *reductio ad absurdum* of sin, indicative of the divine reversal of all Satanic plotting in the universe. Christ's enemies intended by His crucifixion, when they inflicted upon Him the most humiliating and shameful execution they could devise, to reduce Him to ignominy and shame. In the thought of Christ's chief adversary, the devil, it was supposed if he could but secure such a debase-

[1] Psa. 47 : 5. [2] Psa. 2 : 4.

ment of the Son of God as that involved in His execution between two outcasts, His name in human regard would be outcast forever. Such opposition, however, quite overshot the mark, because it was wholly blind to the divine aim and hidden power of the great transaction of reconciliation, to be achieved concomitantly with the crucifixion.

A story is told that some summers ago an American eagle was seen hovering over one of our inland lakes, when all at once it dropped like a plummet into the water, and shortly emerged with a mammoth muscalonge, in its talons; and slowly rose to the upper air. After a little, it began to waver in its flight, and strangely enough began to settle back towards the lake. It actually dropped into the waters and perished with its quarry. A boatman, observing it, rowed out to the spot, and secured the bird with the fish in its grasp. It appeared that when the eagle descended upon the fish, it struck its talons with such force into the bony framework of the fish, that later the eagle found the weight of its prey, either exhausting to its power to fly, or finding itself unable to release its hold, became panic-stricken, and so fell back and perished. So when Satan struck at Christ upon the cross, he overreached himself, and *sin went to its suicide.* Instead of placing Christ in the realm of outcasts, Satan virtually exalted Him to a throne. Unlike the occurrence just referred to, however, the

stroke upon Jesus did not mean the ending of life of a victim, for not being the prey of Satan, Jesus was superior to the ordinary laws of death. The resurrection-life was His as the legitimate outcome of the form of voluntary, sinless dying undergone by such a personage. Through the holy attitude which Christ maintained towards His enemies, He vanquished both sin and death in all their deeper significance. Although indeed He must die, yet "it was not possible that He *should be holden* of death." [1] His death being more than mere mortal dissolution,—even the vicarious tasting of a deeper death,—He moved straight to the resurrection, so that in His living power He was able to turn upon and vanquish His last foe. So through this *turning of the tables* on the empire of evil, Christ could say, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out:—He will be the real *outcast*—and I, if I be lifted up from the earth—literally, 'uplifted out of the earth,' into resurrection-relations, the logical outcome of My voluntary dying—will draw all . . . unto Myself." [2] Says Dr. Frederick Godet, commenting upon this passage and its context, "This suspension on the cross appears as the magnificently ironical emblem of Christ's elevation on the throne." That death upon the cross which was intended to be the mark of Christ's shame, as such He "despised,"

[1] Acts 2 : 24. [2] John 12 : 32.

and by a worthy irony adopted as the symbol of His unique exaltation, conquest and moral glory.

Inspiration then, so far from commending the crime of the Jews, or making it the basis of human salvation, is rather glorying in the divine achievement which so confounded the purposes of the rejectors of Christ; it adopts the term, "the cross" as a symbol ironical—ironical in the sense that the term is used with a meaning *entirely opposite* to the apparent sense—of the complete subversion of all Christ's enemies intended. Apostolic thought pierces to the deep interior meaning of the cross, as God views it, and exalts it to a dignity that implies majestic scorn for that Satanic world-spirit which drove Jesus to the scaffold, while it places the true crown upon the head of the world's risen Redeemer as fit reward for all His measureless travail of soul.

IV

THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S RECONCILING DEATH

That through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death.—*Heb.* 2: 14.

THE term "death" as applied to the nature of Christ's vicarious sufferings for man constituting Him the redeemer, has a meaning in the New Testament altogether unique. That death was more than mortal dying, although mortal dying was linked with it. This would seem to be morally requisite, if a man is to be saved from his real woes. The sentence which was pronounced upon the race at its fall in Eden, was something deeper than mere physical death. The Hebrew reads, "To die thou shalt die."[1] The death which our first parents in the garden died, involved more than mere mortal dissolution, the separation of soul and body. Such a separation indeed was entailed, but sin in itself effects spiritual death, soul-death; not annihilation but a perversion of the functions normal to personality, eventuating in moral unlikeness to God and separation from Him. Such a separation in fellowship between the soul and its God, *itself is death* in the profoundest sense: it is

[1] Gen. 2: 17.

the destruction of the very possibility of God-likeness resulting in malformation and reprobacy of spiritual being. All this and vastly more, is involved in spiritual death.[1]

On any conception of the death which Jesus was ever anticipating lower that this, it seems to us impossible to explain that extraordinary shrinking from the crisis impending, which characterized our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane. We are distinctly told that in that dread experience, His mental anguish was such that He prayed repeatedly that if it were possible "the cup might pass" from Him. The intensity of His prayer and the stress of the conflict within, was such that it is said, "and being in an agony He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became as it were great drops of blood, falling down upon the ground."[2] The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, doubtless commenting upon this experience, says that "in the days of His flesh He offered up prayers and supplications, with strong

[1] "We are not to set the physical sufferings of Christ in separation from, or contrast with, the spiritual agonies, but let us not suppose that the physical death was the atonement, apart from the spiritual death of separation from the Father, which is witnessed by that cry of despair mingled with trust, that broke the darkness. It shows us, as if by one lightning flash, the depth of the gloom. It is like one breaker crashing on a rock-bound coast, the fringe of a dark and tossing sea that can neither be sailed over nor fathomed by us."—*Alexander MacLaren.*

[2] Luke 22 : 44.

crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and having been heard." [1]

Now it will not do to say that Christ in this experience was simply drawing back from mere physical dying, for in that case His attitude would have fallen in heroism far below that of many a martyr, who when the crisis came, has not only risen superior to fear, but has actually welcomed the most agonizing death. If rather we consider that what Jesus is really shrinking from, described in the epistle, is participation in the race's doom of a spiritual death, and that this death is in essence spiritual separation from God, the unutterable bitterness of which Christ was anticipating, our difficulty is relieved.

That Christ's prayer was answered that He might be saved "*out of*" this forsakeness, though not "*from*" it, going to the extent requisite in "tasting" it, would seem evident from the fact that afterwards in the garden an "angel appeared strengthening Him," [2] and from the further fact that His baptism of sorrow on the cross itself issued in resurrection the morning of the third day.

That Christ experienced a spiritual anguish altogether unparalleled is found in the language of His cry on the cross: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" [3] This was the high-water mark of His sorrow. True, many efforts have been made to

[1] Heb. 5 : 7. [2] Luke 22 : 43. [3] Mark 15 : 34.

explain away the evident force of this cry, saying it is an exaggeration due to His peculiar depression, etc.; but such a view can be had only at the expense of the reliability of the self-consciousness of Jesus in His supreme redeeming hour. How this spotless Son of Man could enter into this experience as a reality, may be beyond our psychological analysis, but it is not beyond our faith. That the Holy One by the depth of His sympathy, the infinity of His knowledge and His measureless sensitiveness, should be able to experience the atmosphere at least of spiritual death, presents no more difficulties than does the possibility of the incarnation itself. To take the language as it stands involves the fewer difficulties. That Christ was for the time sympathetically at least, in the place of an outcast world and partook of the sense of the abandoned before a judicial tribunal when He could say only "My God, My God"—not My Father, My Father," is most evident. In what contrast to this consciousness was Christ's cry when He emerged from the cloud, and said,—"*Father* into Thy hands I commend My spirit"; [1] and that other utterance to Mary on the morning after His resurrection when He spoke of His ascension "unto My Father and your Father and My God and your God." [2] The sense of Fatherhood which had been obscured was found again, and with it life and salvation for His own forevermore.

[1] Luke 23: 46. [2] John 20: 17.

In harmony with the view presented sang Mrs. Browning, correcting Cowper's morbid mood as thinking himself deserted by God ; when she wrote :

"Deserted ! God could separate from His own essence rather
And Adam's sins have swept between the righteous Son and Father ;
Yea, once, Immanuel's orphaned cry His universe hath shaken —
It went up single, echoless, 'My God I am forsaken!'

"It went up from the Holy's lips amid His lost creation,
That, of the lost, no son should use those words of desolation ;
That earth's worst phrenzies, marring hope, should mar not hope's fruition,
And I, on Cowper's grave, should see his rapture in a vision ! "

This death, which Christ "tasted for every man," [1] must have been of a sort corresponding at least in nature to that spiritual death which was the curse and ruin of the race.

Canon Moberly in his recent work on "Atonement and Personality," in protest against the idea that Christ endured "the actual penalty of sin," presents the view that "with eyes full open to God He realized the appalling character of sin which is also its doom ; while by His own inherent self-identity with holiness He attained to the otherwise impossible conditions of perfectly atoning penitence." Moberly thinks that penitence for others was thus consummated at the cost of a gradual and voluntary dissolution of Himself. This voluntary consummated penitence for man's

[1] Heb. 2 : 9.

sin—rather than the mere penalty he endured—Moberly contends is the vicarious objective reconciliation; this was the instrument for the conquering of sin—was the absolute destruction of sin; and thus human penitence involving also human holiness became potentially for all men an accomplished fact.

The end Moberly has in view is to find a basis on which the objective and the subjective elements in the redemption may be more truly correlated. His aim is to improve upon that statement of the sufferings of Christ which implies that those sufferings were in the way of "punishment"—that forgiveness is simply remission or non-infliction of penalties. Moreover, Moberly holds that in such a view as he criticises—a view of which he conceives Dr. Dale to be the best exponent,—there is usually a sad omission of emphasis upon the work of the Holy Spirit in consummating redemption. "Calvary stops short of Pentecost"; whereas in the thought of the New Testament the work of Calvary is simply a potentiality having its sequel for man on the subjective side in the work of Pentecost. Short of the work of Pentecost no man is conceived as included in forgiveness, because the imparted Spirit of Christ—given at Pentecost—must have its operating indwelling and reconstructive power within the believer, in order to give efficacy to the work of Calvary. With the practical aim of Canon Moberly's discussion, I find my-

self in sympathy. I would, however, sharply distinguish as he does not, between the endurance by Christ, in any "*quantitative* or equational way," of "the actual penalty of sin" as a "punishment, inflicted from without by another," and the tasting by Christ in a *qualitative* way of the element of penalty for human sin. From an ethical point of view I confess I find less moral difficulty in thus conceiving of Christ's suffering as vicarious than I would in supposing, as Moberly does, that Christ as the perfectly Holy One, could experience a vicarious penitence for sins which He never committed. In either case the difficulty remains—doubtless inexplicable—of understanding just how Christ could vicariously make our cause His own. On either hypothesis, the effect of Christ's work becomes ours on the presupposition that in the end we as believers are to be "in Christ," spiritually one with Him forever.

Meanwhile it is certain that the scriptures represent that the "chastisement of our peace"[1] was upon Him; that "He died the just for the unjust";[2] that He "bare our sins in His own body on the tree";[3] and that "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf."[4] If then these things are Scripturally affirmed of Him, we cannot be far wrong in supposing that Christ tasted a spirtual woe en-

[1] Isa. 53 : 5.
[2] 1 Peter 3 : 18.
[3] 1 Peter 2 : 24.
[4] 2 Cor. 5 : 21.

tirely peculiar and far beyond anything involved in mere mortal dying. Christ's death was a death the poignancy of which no martyr ever knew, the experience of death in its reality, whereas the ideal martyr, or the saint in the transition to glory at the worst only passes through "the valley of the shadow" of it. A friend of the writer, the sainted Dr. W. S. McKenzie, while dying from a most distressing disease, wrote to friends in the mission rooms where he had long laboured, "If any of you have fears about the close of your life on earth, dismiss them. It is only the 'shadow of death' we have to meet. Our Christ grappled the enemy—the substance—and slew him. A shadow may scare you at first, but no shadow can harm you."

Such a form of dying, as we have ascribed to Jesus, was far different in kind from that which His enemies supposed Him to be dying under their inflictions. It was the self-invited, self-imposed death requisite to the pardon and cure of the deep malady of sin, which Jesus died.

Certain non-evangelical minds avow a sense of moral shock at the representation, so common to evangelicalism, that Christ came into the world *with a direct view to death*, expressly in order that He might die. If it were true that the death—the only death contemplated—was the death of murder (or even of suicide) which Christ's crucifiers intended to

visit on Him, we should not wonder at the experience of such shock. But such a view of the death of Christ is most shallow and inadequate; it does not touch the deep reality. The death for which Christ came into the world, that in its elements He might taste it, and then by resurrection be saved out of it, was chiefly a profound non-physical, psychical experience, inseparably connected with the sin-principle: a death of which the crucifiers of Jesus had no conception whatever.

No one who has reflected upon the way in which Christ was accustomed to speak of "His hour," can fail to see that His end was something He habitually had in mind, certainly from the moment of His cleansing of the temple near the entrance upon His public ministry on till the goal was reached on Calvary. He spoke of this hour with precision, "Mine hour is not yet come." [1] "The hour is come that the son of man should be glorified." "And what shall I say? Father save Me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour." [2] "No man took Him because His hour was not yet come." [3] The climax anticipated by Christ in His death-hour, was something in line even with His preincarnate purpose. "Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee (in redemptive purposes) before the world was." [4]

[1] John 2:4. [2] John 12:23-27. [3] John 8:20. [4] John 17:5.

These repeated declarations make it plain that in the purpose of God, entirely apart from all that His enemies ever conceived or intended, He had in thought and principle a determinate mission to accomplish in behalf of the world; and He moved on in the face of all opposition towards the goal, irrespective of the world's utter darkness respecting its nature. This goal was the completion of the reconciliation, as viewed from the divine standpoint. In thought, Christ regarded nothing as really accomplished in His potential scheme, until He should reach and pass through His death hour. "I am come to cast fire on the earth and what will I if—how I wish—it were already kindled; I have a baptism to be baptized with and how am I straitened until it be accomplished." [1] "Till then I am not officially enfranchised."

In His conversation with Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration, in which both the ideals of the celestial world and Christ's world of thought and being were revealed as identical, we are told that the theme was "His decease," His "exodus," which in a process of dying and living again, He was about to *accomplish* in Jerusalem." [2]

All this amounts to proof positive that the reconciling death was itself the explicit goal which Christ had in view in coming into this world. Surely one cannot question that Christ came to the world ex-

[1] Luke 12 : 49. [2] Luke 9 : 31.

pressly that He might die, in some unique sense without discrediting the central teaching of Divine revelation itself.

This death which Jesus connected with His consummate "hour" was wholly voluntary on His part. There was no power on earth that could compel it; it was indeed involved in the eternity of the divine love, a love which has its peculiarity in that it eternally provided to deal with human sin and guilt. In thought, we may conceive that Christ could have withheld Himself from death, and instead thereof have sentenced the world to its destruction, but He did not. Doubtless the spiritual death which Christ experienced, was itself the cause of the cessation of His mortal life on the cross. That death brought on His mortal dying long before His executioners expected to see Him expire. The expression recorded of Him, in which it is said He "cried with a loud voice and yielded up His Spirit," [1] has been rendered by Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll, "He *sent away* His spirit," He "dismissed it," by an action wholly within His own power, when the point was reached that this could be done consistently with the redemptive purpose of that hour. We read that when the centurion who stood over against Him saw that He "so" gave up His spirit, he was impelled to exclaim, "truly this was the Son of God." [2] The cry impressed

[1] Matt. 27 : 50. [2] Matt. 27 : 54.

him as that of one not exhausted from excess of physical agony, but of one having unexpected, supernatural control of the manner and time of His going to the spirit-world.[1] In harmony with this were the words just previously uttered, "Father into Thy hands I commend My spirit," and the yet deeper utterance, "It is finished."

When the soldiers came to break His legs they "saw that He was dead already," therefore "they brake not His legs."[2] From these combined evidences, it seems incredible that Christ really expired from crucifixion wounds. It was the deeper anguish that He experienced from His free assumption of the sin and guilt of man, that killed Him. He Himself was not guilty, not "punished," but, so to speak, He entered "the atmosphere of human guilt." He died of that atmosphere: died of a ruptured heart,[3]

[1] Dr. Alexander MacLaren on the subject substantially expresses himself thus: "The language in which all the evangelists describe the actual death is very full of meaning. They all use expressions parallel with Mark's 'gave up the ghost,' that are not merely periphrastic euphemisms for death, but are to be understood as asserting that Jesus' death was voluntary. He did not die because He was crucified, but because He would. His spirit was not 'required of' Him by the physical consequences of His being nailed to a cross, but was 'given up' by Him because He loved us. Even in submitting to death He showed Himself the Lord of death."

[2] John 19 : 33.

[3] Those who desire to inquire into the nature of our Lord's physical dying, will find some weighty testimonies from physio-

long before the wounds in hands or feet would have occasioned it.

But in the peculiar dying of our Lord, even this was not all; He laid down His life that He "might take it again."[1] We need especially to pause here. If Jesus' death—the redeeming-death—was not the mere effect of a murderous act, neither was that death the death of a suicide. He laid down His life in view of a speedy resumption of it in entirely new relations. In the tenth chapter of John, Jesus declares, "Therefore doth the Father love Me because I lay down My life *that I may take it again.* No one taketh it away from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power (or right) to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment received I from My Father."[2] Jesus laid down His life in such a way, on such a principle, on the basis of such divine sanctions, as exalts it in moral character to an altogether peculiar level. When a suicide gives up his life, his is the act of one who wholly exceeds his authority over his own life; he puts his life beyond his control, and the act itself is intrinsic sin. He thrusts himself a criminal intruder, unbidden, before his time, into the presence of his creator and judge. Not such was the act of Christ in the

logical authorities in the Appendix to Dr. R. W. Dale's work on "The Atonement," p. 462, Note D.

[1] John 10 : 18.

[2] John 10 : 18.

atonement-dying. He died with all heaven waiting to receive Him back as "the King of Glory" at just the moment expected, and in exact accordance with the eternal purpose. The twenty-fourth Psalm celebrates this extraordinary welcome, a welcome which certainly appertains to one who in laying down His life, did it in such a way as to win the approval of the highest heaven; such dying is anything but suicidal death. In such a sense He died, so entirely innocent a being, so holy in all His attitude towards His tormentors, and towards Satan who urged them on, as no other ever died. So preëminently was His spiritual dying, a vicarious, holy dying, that that kind of death could have but one issue, namely, the resurrection. This it was that saved His dying from self-destruction, or suicide. The same authority which gave Him right to lay down His life, gave Him right also to resume it in new and larger relations, and on a more exalted plane.

In the thought of Scripture, the reconciling-death and the resurrection are always to be taken together; they are inseparable parts of a real unity, twin parts of one fact. In Scripture thought, the reconciling-death always eventuates in the resurrection, and the resurrection always presupposes the reconciling-death; the one is not conceived apart from the other. Hence the Apostle Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost, could say, "For it was not possible that

He should be holden of death,"[1] simply because His unique dying involved a unique consummation in the resurrection. It was for this reason that the intervening period of three days between His dying and His resurrection, in principle, was a mere transition. We are told that in that period He "saw no corruption";[2] there was no taint of decay in the fabric of His body, no pollution in a corpuscle of His blood; He had never been in Himself considered the victim of Satan or of sin. He could say, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me, but that the world may know that I love the Father,"[3] and "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?"[4]

When a mere martyr dies, he is in some real sense a prey to his persecutors, and of the remains of sin in his constitution; but in no such sense was Jesus personally a victim. True, He allowed Himself to be treated as if He were, not God's holy Son, but as sin itself. "He who knew no sin was made sin for us."[5] When Christ ascended the altar He did it deliberately, as the master of that altar and all its issues. He was thus no mere martyr; He was the Redeemer of martyrs and the power which enables martyrs. And when He came off that altar, He came with all the majesty of free omnipotence, moving straight to His ascension and to His mediatorial reign.

[1] Acts 2 : 24. [2] Acts 13 : 37. [3] John 14 : 30, 31.
[4] John 8 : 46. [5] 2 Cor. 5 : 21.

Then this self-sacrifice of Christ is nothing less than the principal event in the history of God's revelation to mankind. The cross truly understood is the symbol and the substance of the revelation to us of Deity, not in any mere mood or paroxysm, but of His char acteristic being.

Says Rev. R. J. Campbell: "This striking expression, 'The lamb slain from the foundation of the world,'[1] has a wider significance than is commonly attached to it. The 'foundation of the world' is the slaying of the lamb, that is, the very act of creation involves the sacrifice of God. In creation God goes forth from Himself, as it were, in the Person of the Eternal Son, to return to Himself in a perfected spiritual world wherein self-sacrificing love has proved itself by pain. The whole process of creation, the history of the world, as the Bible teaches it, is the movement of humanity back to its home in God. Now creation is the work of God the Son; that is, it is the giving of His life that the glorious purpose of a perfect spiritual world may be realized. 'Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.'[2] The beginning was the laying down of the life of God the Son; creation implies limitation, and limitation is sacrifice. The sacrifice did not end with the creation of the heavens and the earth. It only began there, but it

[1] Rev. 13 : 8. [2] 1 Cor. 15 : 24.

culminated on Calvary, and will end only when Christ 'hath put all enemies under His feet.'[1] The conception of the lamb slain is the warp and the woof of the moral and spiritual history of the world." What was enacted on Calvary was simply the projection on the plane of time of the eternal state of things, as antedating creation itself, in God's heart. The law of the cross of Christ is the very law of the life of God. The grief in God's heart over the sin of man is a perpetual reality, indicating that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is a perpetual sufferer over the sin of the universe.

One has said: "Could a finite intelligence conceive of a doom more terrible than that which a Holy Being would condemn Himself to, if He were compelled to witness the spectacle which earth must present (of sin), to one who sees it as it is, without veil, or blind, or illusion, and who sees it all at once?" But this is just what God in redemption has done in relation to sin, entering into all the vicarious relationship requisite to recover man from it. By a long self-substitution our Lord condemned Himself century in and century out, to watch the evil in this world, to plead with men because of it; and once for all in Christ, historically He manifested the kind of suffering that was needful to deliver from it. This is the deepest law of the life of our God.

[1] 1 Cor. 15 : 25.

In harmony with such a situation, I do not see how any moral shock can be felt, even by the most sensitive, when it is said that with a direct view to such suffering and dying, Jesus Christ came into the world; for it was in view of such self-sacrifice on the part of God that the world itself was brought into being. It is certain that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares that in the incarnation, Jesus "became a sharer in flesh and blood" of the human race, *expressly in order that "through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death*, that is, the devil, and might deliver all them, who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."[1] Surely no less a death than that spiritual one which I have represented Christ as experiencing, could have power to "bring to nought" such an adversary, as is declared to have had "the power of death."

As by sin came death, and so by death the bond of Satan was cast about all mankind; so through death, —death of an infinitely profound sort,—Jesus has destroyed even Him that had the power of death, and potentially set free forever all His intended victims. No less a death than that we have attributed to Christ could thus avail. It is by virtue of this consummate achievement, that the Redeemer of mankind can exclaim in behalf of all His own, "O death where are thy plagues; O Sheol where is thy

[1] Heb. 2 : 14, 15.

destruction."[1] Thus, it was that self-imposed death —the voluntary tasting of spiritual separation from God—which constituted the reconciliation.

The Apostle Peter clearly meant to emphasize the positive deliberateness of such dying, when in his sermon on the day of Pentecost, he used the explicit phrasing, "Him being delivered up"—*i. e.*, delivered up *into these relations;* relations to the sin of man which He knew would crucify Christ, relations to the divine government, to holiness, to love—"by the *determinate counsel* and foreknowledge of God."[2] But just as certainly the Apostle said that the crucifying and slaying of Jesus "*by the hand of lawless men,*" was another conception of death altogether, in no sense God's act.

Christ was on His errand of love and grace, an errand wholly self-caused, and ready to go to all lengths—to crucifixion shame indeed—even to tasting spiritual death for every man, in His loving unasked assumption of responsibility for our sin and guilt, till it should break His heart with grief and woe; and midway, while on that errand (an errand that in itself did not necessarily call for a crucifixion-crime) the wickedness of man set upon Him, determined to destroy Him. Men did not really kill Him, for Jesus did not die of crucifixion wounds, but of heart rupture, in view of spiritual conditions

[1] Hos. 13 : 14. [2] Acts 2 : 23.

He was voluntarily facing; yet His enemies intended to kill Him, and were as guilty as if they had. Christ's atoning work in its intrinsic nature, was independent of the manner of the attack upon Him by His enemies. The prophetic eye by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, indeed foresaw how men would treat Jesus when He came, even to publicly nailing Him to the wood, to piercing His side, and to the omission to break one of His bones, but this foresight of prophecy, this foreknowledge, should not be mistaken for the *purpose* of God's efficient predetermination, with reference to that deeper death than any Jew or Roman e'er foresaw or was able to inflict, which Jesus died, namely, the death of that voluntary separation from God which He deliberately incurred.

When in the year 1898 the United States Government sent its battleship, the *Maine*, into Havana Harbour on an errand of mercy, an errand of inquiry with a view to the relief of the distressing conditions, induced by the cruelties employed by Spain under the inhuman Weyler, she went with both the majesty and mercy of the United States Government behind her. To that initial act of sending out the battleship, stood committed all that our government might be called upon to sacrifice and suffer, consequent upon the expedition. It was an intervention of righteous mercy. While on this high errand,

hostile hands, as was supposed, set upon the battleship, and destroyed her with hundreds of her precious crew. This act—the real or supposed clandestine destruction of the battleship—in some sense may represent the crucifixion-crime; whereas the majesty and mercy of the errand undertaken in the intention of our government to relieve a long suffering people—this costly mediatory work on which the United States was bent—may represent the divinely voluntary principle of the redemption. This devotion to the real interests of Cuba, with all that it implied of required sacrifice and suffering to the United States, as self-imposed and yet incidentally endured from her enemies, may represent the cost of the redeeming act.

V

THE CROSS AS A REDEEMING ACHIEVEMENT

And they overcame Him because of the blood of the Lamb.— *Rev.* **12 : 11.**

THE cross of Christ was not only a symbol of the Redeemer's voluntary sacrificial work indicating also that He had tasted that spiritual death—that sense of separation from God—which man's sin incurred ; but the cross represented also an actual triumph over every potency of evil which had come into the world through sin. What the benefits of that triumph were and the principles on which they were secured, I shall consider later. It is now important to make clear the matter that the work of Christ was an actual objective achievement, won in behalf of others. There are those who contend that the cross simply marked the tragic end of the greatest of prophets ; they place the emphasis on what Jesus taught and to what cost to Himself He taught it in His pre-crucifixion life, and not on what He achieved in the way of a cure of the moral malady and guilt of the race ; thus they imply that He died only as the chief of martyrs ; the value of His cross was

in the mere moral influence He acquired through so tragic endurance of what His persecutors laid upon Him. In this respect He was the consummate revelation of the real character of God as self-sacrificing love; He bore our sins only in the sense that at such incidental cost to the deliverance of His message, He expressed the intensity of His will to save. On this view there was no penal element whatever in what Christ suffered; His sufferings had no respect to any principle of righteous justice or judgment in the government of God.

Now as over against this view, a view which represents only a part of the truth, I shall point out as I proceed that the death of Christ was really a judgment-death; it could not have accomplished what recovery from the sin-situation in the world demanded without being such a judgment-death. Before however defining in what respect it is such a death, some preliminary considerations will prepare us to apprehend the term, which we grant is somewhat uncommon.

The meaning of this term "judgment" has been grossly misconceived as synonymous with a sentence of reprobation, and, in consequence, the most unhappy revolt against it exists in "the modern mind." The existing prejudice is doubtless due to an oversight of a very different and gracious sense in which the Bible uses the term. The word often is employed

in the sense of merciful intervention, vindication. Matthew, quoting from Isaiah, says: "He shall declare judgment to the Gentiles . . . a bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory, and in His name shall the Gentiles hope." [1]

Prof. George Adam Smith, commenting on certain gracious uses of the term in Isaiah, says:—"The English word 'judgment'—in the Hebrew 'mishpat'—is a natural but misleading translation of the original, and we must dismiss at once the idea of judicial sentence which it suggests." He says the word "judgment" often means not only "the civic righteousness and justice, but these *with God* behind them"; [2] and I would add, a God who is *filled with mercy and grace* as well as truth, and who intends through His redeeming work to use all the strength of His holiness to uphold His mercy and give it divine effect in the recovery of the lost. Judgment in the Scriptures is never used—not even in the Old Testament—in the vindictive but rather in the vindicatory sense,—vindicatory of God's merciful way of pardoning the sinner, as well as of upholding God's moral rule. [3] When therefore the psalmist

[1] Matt. 12: 18-21.

[2] "The Book of Isaiah," Vol. ii, p. 298.

[3] Certain interpreters speak of some of the Psalms, *e. g.*, the Thirty-fifth and the One Hundred and Ninth as "imprecatory," implying that the writer while yet ignorant of the spirit of

cries: "Save me, O God by Thy name, and judge me in Thy might!" [1]—he is pleading surely not for judicial doom, but for an administration of mercy harmonious with justice: and again when he says of the coming Redeemer, "He will judge the poor of the people," [2] He means the Redeemer will rescue them from the oppressor. When Jesus in the gospel said, after opening the eyes of the blind:—"For judgment came I into this world that they that see not may see," [3]—He was uttering a great generalization concerning His reign of grace; as if He had said:—"For a merciful administration, yet a righteous one, am I come into the world."

Thus it is clear that the term "judgment" as used

grace, afterwards to be manifested in Christ Jesus, was meanwhile expressing his personal prejudice or passion in the form of vindictiveness. The difficulty has always seemed to me factitious. Assuming that these writings are indited by the Divine Spirit, it appears to me truer to conceive the writer while preserving Hebraic forms of expression, as yet so swallowed up in the divine consciousness of the necessary antagonism of holiness to sin that his own personal feeling was practically overcome; that there was a Spirit higher than his own, uttering itself in him. The so-called imprecations are not the utterance of threats, but the statement of the certain sequences of unrepentant sin. The same difficulty exists in the New Testament term "wrath to come"; but the difficulty vanishes when it is remembered that divine wrath is not like human passion, the result of irritation, but is the necessary antagonism of a holiness which cannot look upon sin, much less make a truce with it.

[1] Ps. 54: 1 [2] Ps. 72: 4. [3] John 9: 39.

in the Scriptures in a fundamental aspect of its meaning, is peculiarly a term of grace. Nothing could be more tender in character : it offers all the sheltering hospitality of a dove-cote to returning aliens whenever they may come flying as clouds, to home themselves in God.

Be it observed also that this idea of a Redeemer's judgment in the thought of Scripture, means far more than sacrifice, or mere altruistic love. In the thought of our time there is much confusion of sacrifice and judgment as respects the cross. Now the cross was indeed the divine sacrifice, but it was more ; it looked in two directions : it regarded the claims of the divine holiness on the one hand, and it sought to recover the sinner from his ruin on the other. Sacrifice is not a final idea apart from judgment ; it is not an end in itself. Sacrifice is only a means ; judgment is an end, and Christ's work must accomplish this end if it is to prove saving. Judgment is final in its nature, because it is vindication : it establishes both righteousness and grace. Appreciation of judgment then is only the appreciation of moral and redemptive reality, but that is at the basis of everything in religion. If we make light of the idea of judgment we shall necessarily scorn the actual moral and redemptive situation of the world, and that means spiritual anarchy.

Said Jesus, looking straight into the meanings of

His cross: "Now is the judgment of this world": [1] now is a crisis; but such a crisis as involved all that is deepest in the final judgment of mankind.

It is because of this principle of judgment in the very nature of this universe as moral that no statement of the reconciliation can ever long be satisfying which does not embody in itself the expiatory principle.

Of course, by expiatory, I do not mean expiatory in any pagan sense of the term—no mere appeasement or placation—God is not irritated nor exasperated that He needs to be won over to a better mood. I conceive of expiation as embracing at least three elements:

(1) Expiation is a necessity of the holiness of God, and holiness must suffer in view of human sin. It is its nature to do so; and of course it suffers vicariously. The cry of God in the garden for the guilty fallen, "Where art thou?" [2] was not as Dr. Henry G. Weston has said, "the call of a policeman, but the wail of a broken-hearted father." It was suffering holiness seeking to redeem. (2) Sin requires to be expiated in the sense that a public and adequate acknowledgment needs to be made and endured of sin's intrinsic ill-desert—what one has called "Christ's apology in behalf of the race for the insult done to God's holiness." This apology needs to be made by one competent in

[1] John 12: 31. [2] Gen. 3: 9.

such a matter ; by one no less competent than the Son of God, one *en rapport* with the Father. Such an acknowledgment was made by Christ in man's behalf, in the responsibilities assumed by His self-immolation on the cross. (3) Sin needs to be expiated in the sense that a process needs to be instituted within the soul itself, which in the end will destroy the victimizing power of evil, and instead thereof will establish righteousness upon sin's ruin, effectually and forever. This Christ potentially achieved through His corporate identification with the race in His divine human life, eventuating in death and resurrection, and in the promised Spirit of Pentecost. As risen and living, He waits and yearns to form Himself by His Spirit within the believer, as "the hope of glory." [1]

Dr. William Ashmore of China, who from long contact with Oriental life, has an uncommon insight into the corporate principle which is so prominent also in the Bible, that oriental book, has forcefully expressed this saving achievement. Contending earnestly that no change in God's original plan was involved through the fall of man, Dr. Ashmore says that God provided for the realization of His saving purposes by sending such a Son into the world as might be incorporated into the race of man. This Son was "endowed with a *death-bearing* body and a *life-giving* power." Accordingly, He could die for man,

[1] Col. 1 ; 27.

and yet live again ; and man in Him could also die and yet rise and live in Him. This was an actual achievement accomplished in behalf of man, and by means of it sin was actually expiated in principle, and so could be put away from all them that believe.

It will be seen that by such a view of expiation there is implied no question of willingness or unwillingness on the part of God to save. It is rather a matter of *moral consistency* that is involved. The question is how shall the majesty of God's holy law, in which the very universe is constituted, be upheld in harmony with His eternal loving disposition to save? The answer in one word is this : the atonement morally *enables* God "to act as He feels." The problem with God is not in the exercise of the forgiving act, but in so forgiving as to express adequate disapproval of the enormity of sin, and at the same time awaken a new spontaneity in the one forgiven, to loathe and leave his sin. True, everything that historically came out in the mediating work of Christ was eternally embraced in the heart and purpose of God. God needed nothing outside Himself to move Him to this. He required indemnity only from Himself and not from another. So to speak, He took the eternal initiative. In so doing He disturbed no cosmic order. This however is no reason for supposing that God did not have the best of reasons for histor-

ically manifesting what was in Him in such self-consistent form as the Bible presents.

Doubtless the redemptive work of Christ has sometimes been conceived as a "foreign importation from heaven into our world"; that is, as something not originally contemplated, but as an after-thought obtruded into the cosmic order of the universe as if by a third party outside of either God or man. Thus the reconciling work of Christ has been made to appear as something entirely artificial and really contrary to the deepest nature of things. Now the main contention of this treatise is that Christ on Calvary was simply historically expressing that which was at the heart of things, in the eternal thought of God, in the original conception of the universe. Accordingly that which was expressed by Christ was entirely—to use the phrase of Dr. Geo. B. Foster in his "Finality of the Christian Religion"—"indigenous to the soil and substance of reality itself." And if this be so, there can be no conflict between the reconciling work of the Cross and any ancient or modern view of the world which is grounded in a true theistic philosophy. In other words, Christian redemption and the cosmic order of the universe, when both are understood, are entirely harmonious.

But some one will ask, if God needed nothing outside Himself to move Him to redeem, why should He not be able to forgive sin on repentance alone?

Why should any mediatorship at all be necessary? In a very deep sense, God does forgive the sinner upon his repentance. If, however, any should feel moved thus to represent the matter of forgiveness, the terms employed should be used understandingly. We must recognize what implications belong to the Deity as thus conceived, and what is the nature of the penitence contemplated. The God who can thus forgive is a God who in Himself, and through His Son from eternity, has entered into responsibility for the sinner's sin through what we call the reconciliation—His self-wrought reconciliation. And the penitence in mind is a right reciprocal attitude of the sinner towards the mediating God in view of a wrong doing which necessitated such a sacrifice of God's only begotten Son.

Thus if the terms used could only be understood in their true evangelical sense, there would be no objection to saying that God forgives sin in view of real repentance; for a deep conception of mediatorship on the part of the Divine-human Christ is implied in all the terms employed.

That man could have repented adequately and easily, with no cross-enactment to reveal God's nature and sin's enormity, we gravely doubt. Even God needs to forgive wisely and man to repent *understandingly*. The principles on which God can consistently forgive require to be shown, if man is to repent

deeply: if the sense of his guilt is to be removed, and his conscience put at rest. To say the least, it was a most gracious concession to man's weakness when God concretely revealed in the historic cross His way of pardoning and removing the sense of guilt, as well as the measureless cost of it.

In the reconciliation, God, in the person of His Son, entered into potential responsibility for the situation created by sin, and with a view of doing the highest justice to all the issues involved. In such an undertaking He could not escape the requirements imposed upon Him by His own holy nature; nor could even man's normal conscience be satisfied with less. And it was important that this should be shown forth openly or publicly in His universe. If God is to pardon, He must do it in a way which will not legitimize sin. Says the late Principal Cave, "The death of Jesus was a more splendid vindication of righteous rule than the death of all sinners would have been. Who could say henceforth that sin had been lightly forgiven, and the interests of holy rule endangered?" That the vindication of God's righteous rule which took place in the depths of the divine nature is a thing profounder than our reason can fully penetrate, is not strange, since the Bible declares it was a thing so deep that angels cannot sound it. This vindication was more than a truth taught; it was an accomplishment wrought out,

A special reason why repentance alone, in the non-evangelical sense of that term, is not adequate, is that there is in all men the haunting sense of guilt, which, as Dean Freemantle says, "cannot be pacified by any merely subjective process."

The reason why repentance alone, except as evangelical, is not adequate is that the very repentance admitted to be necessary is itself chiefly *conditioned on the realization of the mediating work of Christ as objective.* Man cannot repent as he needs apart from the cross; nor can he repent when he will, or without requisite motive. Says Professor Denney: "All true penitents are children of the cross." "A true repentance must be towards God; it involves the wakened consciousness of what our sin is to Him, of the wrong it does to His holiness, of the wounds it inflicts on His love. Repentance is the reaction towards God produced in the soul by Christ's demonstration of what sin is to Him. One lacks motive to repent till he sees the bearing of his sin upon the suffering Saviour. One most really and deeply repents in view of the horror of the judgment his sin brought on Christ.[1] Repentance is thus vastly more than a mere change of mind; it is a *change of care*

[1] Of course, we speak of the ideal, intelligent, biblical repentance, "the repentance which needeth not to be repented of," of which there would be vastly more if the current preaching of our time dealt more plainly with the facts and principles of the redemptive system of Christ as the Scriptures teach it.

respecting one's responsibility towards the situation created by his sin. This change of care reaches so far as to wish to have justice done to the whole situation, a matter to which God in Christ's cross only is equal. Accordingly, when the soul sees the Redeemer thus working in majestic and yet tender self-consistency and on principles of finality, it is touched to the depths by the vision as by nothing else.

Says Dr. Marcus Dods, "Mere forgiveness would not make men penitent nor impel to righteousness. In order to this, a *perception* of God's righteousness is necessary. The cross *exhibits* both God's love and righteousness, and hence is the *supreme* and *perfect instrument* for producing repentance." Thus we see that the objective death of Christ is itself *the means of removing* the *most radical subjective obstacle* to that very repentance, conceded to be necessary.

Says Dr. George Adam Smith in his late work, entitled, "The Forgiveness of Sins":

"At the foot of Christ's cross, men have known a conscience of sin, a horror of it, and by consequence, a penitence for their own share in it, deeper than anything else has started in human experience. And as thus their whole spiritual nature has been aroused, and they have awakened to the truth that it would not have been safe, nor in any wise morally well, for them to have been forgiven by mere clemency and without feeling what sin costs, they come to under-

stand that in His sufferings Christ was their substitute."

Says Professor Harnack, who, only six years ago, despite his radical positions on historical criticism, most positively expressed himself in the "Symposium on the Atonement," referred to in my Foreword, to this effect: "There is an inner law that compels the sinner to look upon God as a wrathful judge; . . . it tears the heart of man, robs him of peace, and drives him to despair. This conception of God is a false (a misleading) one, and yet not false, for it is the necessary consequence of man's sin. How can this conception of God be overcome? When the Holy One descends to sinners, lives with them, and dies for them, then their terror of the awful judge melts away and they believe that the Holy One is love, and that there is something mightier still than justice . . . mercy! The most earnest Christians consider also Christ's passion and His death as vicarious. How can they do otherwise? If they, the sinners, have escaped justice, and He, the Holy One, has suffered death, why should they not acknowledge that that which He has suffered was what they should have suffered? In the presence of the cross, no other feeling, no other note, is possible. It is a holy secret not understood by the profane, and yet the power of God and the wisdom of God."

In view of the enormous moral difficulty which has

been introduced into the universe by the fact of sin, how any one can object to God's finding and exercising a method of self-consistent action for the salvation of men, and wholly at His own cost, is beyond my comprehension. The cross of the redemption is morally great, because it so deals with the method of adjudication of the issues between God and the sinner. It has in view a basis of settlement, and a method of moral administration which in the end will approve themselves both to God and to all moral beings.

Dr. Denney in his book, "The Death of Christ," has some profoundly true comments on the use of the word αἰωνίος—commonly rendered—eternal as employed in Hebrews. In chapter 9, verse 14, for example, Christ is said to have "offered Himself through eternal spirit"; and Dr. Denney adds, thus "in Christ's sacrifice, we see the final revelation of what God is, that behind which there is nothing in God; so that the religion which rests on that sacrifice rests on the ultimate truth of the divine nature and can never be shaken." Again, in chapter 13, verse 20, the blood of Christ is called "the blood of an eternal covenant"; and Dr. Denney says "that is, in the death of Christ the religious relation is constituted between God and men, which has the character of finality. God, if it may be so expressed, has spoken His last word; He has nothing in reserve."

When, concludes the learned professor, "the author

of the Epistle speaking of the work of Christ in its substance as fulfilling the foreshadowings of Mosaic symbols, says they are 'eternal,' he means to say not so much that they are enduring, everlasting, as that they are *ultimates* in the realm of spiritual reality."

The death of Christ considered as "the judgment-death" of the Redeemer is thus in the category of things *final;* it is *ultimate* truth, for in such dying Christ was dealing once for all as the redeeming situation required, with the bottom realities as the Eternal One Himself sees them. This dealing was a reconstructive force in the moral universe.

The Cross of Christ, properly understood, was an anticipation of and expressed the final judgment of the world in at least four respects:

I. The cross was such a judgment in the sense that in and by it Christ acknowledged and met the due judgment of spiritual death, which belongs to the sin-principle, the collective evil, of the race. Christ in His sufferings was not in a commercial sense offering a *quid pro quo*, a certain amount of pain for a given amount of sin: in no quantitative sense was He offering suffering for sin. While Christ's sufferings were not a mechanical substitution for the judgment we merited, yet there was involved in it a substitutionary, a vicarious principle.

Most evangelical books on the atonement, from Anselm down, place marked emphasis on the substi-

tutionary character of the work of Christ, and properly so. But there has often been lack of care to make clear just what is meant when the term "substitutionary" is employed. It is at this point that the characteristic Unitarian objection against the evangelical idea is made. Says Dr. Martineau in a burst of moral protest: "How is the alleged immorality of letting off the sinner, mended by the added crime of penalty crushing the sinless? Of what man—of what angel—could such a thing be reported without raising a cry of indignant shame from the universal human heart? What should we think of a judge who should discharge the felons from the prisons of a city, because some noble and generous citizen offered himself to the executioner instead?"

This difficulty of Dr. Martineau's in substance has often been reiterated, but in reality the objection is founded on most serious misconceptions of all that the New Testament means, when it says that Christ died for our sins. In Christ's sufferings, the Father also from the beginning profoundly shared so that the suffering of Christ was not strictly those of "another." Besides, we cannot by such faulty analogy as Dr. Martineau uses, so easily dispose of the realities which underlie New Testament representations. What Dr. Martineau has entirely left out of view, is the real divine-human nature of Christ's person—His union with the Father—on the one hand, and the deep im-

plied reality of the spiritual union between Christ and the believer, on the other. The death of Christ on behalf of men is by no means represented by the analogy of some "noble and generous citizen" or "angel" dying in place of a "felon." The solidarity of Christ with both God and the human race,—even as the race's new corporate head—is the entirely original and fundamental fact, involved in any true conception of the vicarious work of Christ. The believer is "in Christ," and Christ is in him in such an organic sense as no "noble citizen" and criminal "felon" could ever be one. Thus we are not to think of Christ as one person, and the believer as another, in that severe separative sense implied in Dr. Martineau's analogy. When Christ is said to die for another, it is upon the presupposition that such an one, a real believer, is to come into mystical vital union with Christ; so that as thus identified with Christ, the believer dies with Christ to the life of self and sin, and then lives again in the power of a risen life. Thus the redeeming work of Christ is radically unlike a commercial transaction, a mere bargain. A true characterization of the reconciliation of Christ must represent it as vicario-vital.

With such presuppositions as these, in which the principle of substitution indeed is recognized, but with the most radical qualifications safeguarding it against immoral implications, the matter of substitu-

tion becomes a very different thing from that supposed by Dr. Martineau; and so the fallacious objection falls to the ground. I confess, at this point, I think Dr. Denney's recent statement of the substitutionary principle in the cross is inadequate. It is too mechanical. It is far from doing justice to the essential, evangelical idea, and certainly to all those New Testament representations, which presuppose a mystical and organic union between the divine Christ and the believer.[1]

A chief thing in Christ's redeeming work on the cross was the deep acknowledgment Christ was making in His moral nature of the kind of thing sin is, its quality. The essential virulence of sin is such that God in Christ saw that it merited death, spiritual death, such death as Christ, in principle, experienced

[1] "The atonement, like every other doctrine of Christianity, is a fact of life; and such facts of life cannot be crowded into our definitions, because they are greater than any definitions that we can frame. The atonement is a substitution, in that another has done for us what we ought to have done but could not do, and has suffered for us what we deserved to suffer but could not suffer without loss of holiness and happiness forever. But Christ's doing and suffering is not that of one external and foreign to us. He is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh; the bearer of our humanity; yes, the very life of the race. The life that He lived in Palestine and the death that He endured on Calvary were the revelation of a union with mankind which antedated the Fall. Being thus joined to us from the beginning, He has suffered in all human sin; in all our affliction He has been afflicted."—*Augustus H. Strong.*

on the cross. Is it not certain that theologians would have been truer to the nature of Christ's work, if they had put less emphasis on the mere pain as such which Christ bore, and had put more upon the moral acknowledgment He so sublimely made? The essential thing about the attitude of Christ in assuming what He did for us, was that He did it with absolute submissiveness; He never complained about it; He always admitted its perfect righteousness. The practical concessions to righteousness which characterized all Christ's attitude, while bearing our sins for us, were what so vindicated God, and what have so committed us to self-identification with righteousness. Again, it was "this mighty and sacred reaction against sin, the signal for which was given by the moral sense of the normal head of humanity," which conditioned all the future and permanent blessedness of men. Says Dr. Godet: "When Christ gave out His last submissive cry upon the cross, it was in one conscience alone that this judgment of the world's sin, the echo of that which God pronounces in heaven took place. But as there is only one rationality in all intelligent minds, so in reality there is only one and the same conscience (normally speaking) in all moral beings; and thus it is that the cry which came from that one perfectly normal conscience, is yet to reëcho in all other human consciences." It was the prophecy of a new filial relation of man to God. It

was for this that the potencies of Pentecost were given.

It is a matter for deep reflection that Christ did not magnify the pains He bore, so much as He did the propriety of yielding to the Father's will, to the fulfilment of Scripture and other great moral ends; He made little of mere suffering and pain; He never appealed for pity as such. Even on the way to His cross, when "there followed Him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented Him," Jesus turned unto them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."[1] He would not have the mere compassion of men, because He was moving upon the principles of the highest self-respect and towards the highest of all goals. There was something infinitely deeper than the mere sympathy of mankind to be effected by the cross of redemption. The pain He endured, measureless as it was, was quite subordinate to the acknowledgment made in the moral realm. The sin-principle deserved spiritual death; Christ owned it, welcomed and experienced it, and in so doing He also triumphed over it. This was the primary and ineradicably righteous element in the reconciliation.

Under the ethical order of the universe such an order as recognizes that sin is a reality to be over-

[1] Luke 23: 28.

come, Christ accepted, as Mr. Carnegie Simpson says in his "Fact of Christ," "Humanity's condition as His condition because it was the condition of the humanity with which He identified Himself, and He then dealt with it in a great and serious and real way; not seeking to shirk it or to subvert it, but doing all that is right by it; and He did right by it by letting all that such a condition had to say be said to Himself. . . . The ethical law concerning sin and doom was in no wise suppressed, but was given effect to really and adequately. The ethical order of the universe thus is not only not compromised, but firmly upheld."

Many years ago, the late Bronson Alcott, who has been called "The American Pestalozzi," introduced into his boys' school in Boston this peculiar form of discipline, that for a certain transgression the penalty should be visited by Mr. Alcott's grace upon himself, the master of the school, rather than upon the guilty pupil. Miss Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, an assistant in the school, thus records substantially this interesting bit of history:

Mr. Alcott having previously explained to the school the necessity of pain, and brought his pupils to acknowledge the uses of "this hurting of the body," in concentrating attention, he instituted the method referred to. For the wrong done, the pupil must administer punishment upon Mr. Alcott's own

hand. The guilty person must inflict the hurt. The pupils at first declared that they would never do it; they said they preferred being punished themselves, but he determined they should not escape the pain and the shame of administering the stroke upon him except by being themselves blameless. On the morning this new form of discipline was announced, there was a profound stillness,—a more complete silence, attention and obedience than there had ever been. Mr. Alcott in two instances took boys into the anteroom for the punishment; they were very unwilling and at first they struck lightly; he then asked them if they thought they deserved no more than that, and so they were obliged to increase the force of the blows, but it was not without tears which they never had shed when they themselves were punished. Said one of the boys at his home afterwards: "This is the most complete punishment that a master ever invented. There is not a boy in school but would a great deal rather be punished himself than punish him."

The chief aim was to awaken solemn attention and touch the heart to love and generosity; to show not want of feeling for their bodies, but a deeper and intense interest in their souls, and this was completely effected. The result, moreover, in practical outworking was fairly contagious, and the most gracious effects were realized by the school as a whole.

An acquaintance of mine, a father whose relation to his family has been one of rare beauty and grace, told me the following: On one occasion his young son grossly disobeyed him and afterwards denied it. The father called his son before him, pointed out how very serious the fault was, and then asked the son what he thought should be done about it. The son replied, "You should punish me." The father answered, "I think that would be right," and took him aside to inflict the chastisement. But as he was about to do so, the father paused and said, "Now, my boy, this fault is a grievous one, but you are a small, weak child; I am a strong man; I think I can better afford to bear this punishment than you." So, removing his own coat and putting a whip into the hand of the boy, he commanded him to strike heavily several times. The boy in astonishment did so, but in the midst of it broke down and fled to his chamber, where he was shortly afterwards found upon his knees begging the Divine forgiveness. The illustration is only partial; but the moral honor involved in the case was maintained, and the father's love also was expressed, and at the same time the boy's heart was melted.

These forms of discipline represent *judgment-inflictions*, modes of governmental administration, or vindications, corresponding in some degree at least, to what we are speaking of as a *judgment-death* in the case

of Christ's suffering for the race ; and in one way or another they enter deeply into the divine spirit of moral discipline and government ; and they are always working energies in the moral universe.

Says Dr. Denney : "The love which can literally go out of itself and make the burden of others its own is the radical principle of all the genuine and victorious morality of the world. It is one of the startling truths of the moral life that the consequences of sin, striking visibly upon the innocent, have in certain circumstances a peculiar power to redeem the sinful. When they are accepted, as they sometimes are accepted, without repining or complaint—when they are borne, as they sometimes are borne, freely and lovingly by the innocent,—because to the innocent the guilty are dear—then something is appealed to in the guilty which is deeper than guilt ; something may be touched which is deeper than sin, a new hope and faith may be born in them, to take hold of love so wonderful, and by attaching themselves to it to transcend the evil past. The suffering of such love (they are dimly aware) or rather the power of such love persisting through all the suffering brought on it by sin, opens the gate of righteousness to the sinful in spite of all that has been ; sin is outweighed by it ; it is annulled, exhausted, transcended in it. The great atonement of Christ is somehow in line with this." It actually accomplishes something. It is at this

point that the impressional power also of the crucifixion scene rightly viewed is so great.

II. The cross of Christ's achievement expresses an aspect of judgment in a further sense, that by the moral attitude which Christ maintained up to the last moment on His cross, He entirely set at nought the world-principle, or the Satanic philosophy devised and personalized by the devil. Students of the reconciliation usually content themselves with merely considering the question whether the work of Christ bore only upon man in the way of moral influence, or whether it likewise bore on God as well, modifying His governmental attitude towards man. For myself, I believe it had a relation to both. But there is a third matter with which the mediating work of Christ needed also to deal; namely, the entire realm of moral evil and with Satan its head. Strangely, in most modern discussion this has been largely overlooked; yet nothing connected with the matter is more fundamental. The devil indeed, considered as the personalized head of this realm of evil, has virtually and falsely dropped out of the modern mind, the mind even of some theologians. We need to return to that primitive revelation of fact, if we are to realize the profound nature of our Redeemer's task. That the seduction of our race was gained by the wiles of an actual personage of evil, coming from without, is just as certainly revealed in the Bible as is the provision

of redemption, coming also from without. The devil need not be conceived with mediæval grotesqueness indeed, as a monster with horn and hoof and fiery breath. Christ characterizes him as "the prince of this world." [1] He is thus the prince of all that homes itself in agreeable, sensuous, material world-conditions. He embodies in himself all that is most attractive, genial, and popular to the worldly mind. To quote Dr. Forsyth: —"The world is proud of him; he has its confidence; he is the agent of methods which the world thinks essential to its prosperity and stability, which are its notion of eternal life. The world he represents has no idea that its moral methods can be bettered, or its principles overthrown. To its mind, the moral is an impertinence, and the spiritual is a superstition, feeble, but capable of becoming dangerous, and therefore to be fought. And Satan is just as sensible of the antagonism as is Christ. There is no compromise possible. 'The Prince of life' and the 'Prince of this world' were destined to meet in a struggle which is inevitable, and a judgment which is final. And that meeting was in the cross."

Christ there achieved a result, which by virtue of its very nature dealt Satan his death-blow. The Bible indeed is mainly the story of an age-long conflict between the old serpent, the devil, and the seed of the woman, the divine Son of man. Revelation opens

[1] John 12: 31.

with the first stage of the onset, in which at first it would appear that Satan is victorious, and it closes with a *dénouement* wherein the devil is overcome and "cast into the lake of fire." [1]

The story of Christ's public ministry is introduced by the record of that extraordinary experience in the wilderness of Judea, wherein Satan, in three typical appeals to subtle but false principles, hoped to overthrow the moral standing of "the last Adam." [2] In that contest Satan was vanquished at every point, yet he left the Saviour but "for a season." [3] Throughout His public ministry, Jesus is repeatedly met by demoniacal intrusions into His thought with all their monstrous possibilities of perversion. These demons were often defiant of Christ, and yet Christ was on every field their master. They knew Him even from of old, and owned to the certainty of their future torment because hopelessly antagonistic to Him.

On one occasion when Herod would fain waylay Jesus, He replied to the Pharisees who sought to move Him by such a threat,—"Go and say to that fox,—that master of all artifice, subtlety and chicanery—behold, I *cast out devils*, and I *do cures* to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I *am perfected*." [4] Thus in three brief sentences Christ sums up His entire career. The first characteristic, observe, is this: "I

[1] Rev. 20: 10.
[2] 1 Cor. 15: 45.
[3] Luke 4: 13.
[4] Luke 13: 32.

cast out devils"; that is, "I master the subtlest enemy of man, the diabolical. That distinguishes My work; it underlies both My power over disease and the certainty of My triumph over death." It was therefore most intimately connected with the reconciliation He always had in view, upon the principles of which He ever proceeded, in all His pre-crucifixion life. Of course, at the cross, the fierceness of the temptation culminated. To the last Jesus resisted. In no single instance, in no particular, did He yield to His adversary's enticement. The devil's sophistries gained no lodgment in the shrine of Christ's spirit, so that at the end of His career He could say: "The prince of this world hath been judged";[1] he "hath nothing in Me."[2] The ultimate logic of all Satan's casuistries, half-truths and plausible fictions at every point had been overthrown, despite their seductiveness, by Christ's absolute fidelity to the Father's plan for Him. They had no standing whatever before the tribunal which Christ vicariously faced for man. In our Lord's uttermost crisis, though He was Himself forsaken of God, yet Christ forsook not Him, in the interest of a single plausible false witness which the devil bore. The Satanic testimony was impeached throughout.

In this attitude Jesus wholly set at nought,—He cast out of court, He utterly "non-suited" the ad-

[1] John 16 : 11. [2] John 14 : 30.

versary. Thus through the triumph which Christ achieved in His death, the ultimate, absolute judgment of the world, the worldly principle, and its prince, potentially took place. The cross, as Christ viewed it, represented the last standard, "the last judgment," before which all moral and spiritual principles will be brought for their final unveiling; and there He was victorious.

III. In a third sense, the cross of the redemption expresses its final judgment upon the world, although in a most gracious sense, in that it has generated and made available a power whereby the nexus between sin and spiritual death is potentially destroyed. When the tempter had accomplished the disobedience of our first parents in the garden, he knew that he had become the occasion of establishing a fatal connection between sin and death. Under that dread causation the race has ever since, apart from Christ, existed. But now Christ, through His great achievement on the cross, has wrought a work profounder far. He has dissolved the fateful bond, so that though indeed I am a sinner, yet I need not see death, that is, real doom, spiritual and eternal death; for Christ being in me and I in Him, the relationship between sin and its natural doom has been destroyed. In this sense Christ "hath *abolished* death."[1]

Striking symbols of the reality of which I am speak-

[1] 2 Tim. 1:10.

ing are found in some of our Lord's miracles or signs. For example, once when Jesus was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath, He beheld "a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and she was bound together and could in no wise lift herself up; and when Jesus saw her He called her and said to her, 'woman, thou art *loosed* from thine infirmity.' And He laid His hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight and glorified God."[1] This woman had been bound by Satan in the sense that the bond between sin and her infirmity had been made secure through a relation of which Satan was the agent. That causation was still in force; but Jesus by a word immediately annulled it; He loosed the bond, and the woman, through His grace, stood up free. The ruler of the synagogue was moved with indignation because Jesus had healed her on the Sabbath, but Jesus replied with a confidence showing how much deeper is His grace than the laws of traditional Judaism and of Satan's empire combined,—"Ye hypocrites, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering. And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, to have been *loosed from this bond* on the day of the Sabbath,—the day symbolic of redemptive freedom!" No wonder that, "as He said these things all His adversaries

[1] Luke 13: 10-17.

were put to shame, while all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him." Relatively, all that Satan has done, or can do with the victims of sin, is to halter them in the stall; while Christ coming into the world is commissioned and empowered to set them free, and to lead them into the green pastures and beside the still waters in His divine service. Redemption is deeper than natural causation. If, therefore, any Christian is inclined to say in view of one set of facts, "I am an evolutionist"; in view of profounder facts, he should rejoice the more to confess, "I am a redemptionist."

How striking then is the fact which we have noted, that somewhere between sin and its logical curse stands the Christ of the cross who, having Himself first endured the solemn judgment which sin necessitates, and who having dealt its author his death-blow by the manner of His ascent to the cross, now further dissolves the causation between sin and death, "destroys the works of the devil,"[1] and turns the tables on Him. "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."[2] This subjective operation of grace within ourselves is a fruit of the objective gospel, a new form of the judgment which by grace becomes salvation, the redeeming moral reality for us. In this work of mercy appropriated by our faith, does Christ's cross approve

[1] 1 John 3 : 8. [2] Rom. 6 : 23.

itself in experience as the real power of God as well as the wisdom of God. In this divine change in the settlement of our spiritual relations to God, Christ brings forth "judgment unto victory," [1] even our victory as well as His own, over spiritual death and its consequences. Who can complain of such an element in the vindication of God's method of government, and its consequent benediction upon His redeemed people.

IV. The cross expresses a new and gracious judgment concerning the world also in this respect, namely, that, by virtue of its achievement, all men have been placed in the relations of a reversionary treasure to Christ; they are *adjudged to Christ;* they belong to Him, potentially, as a precious possession,—like the treasure hidden in a field—because of the altered relation in which Christ's redemptive work on the cross has placed them to Himself.[2] It is a matter of time and method as to how this shall be worked out into actuality. With multitudes the potentiality never becomes actualized. Calvary in itself stops short of Pentecost, and the divine acts of the Spirit. But the adjudgment in its principle and moral intention goes further; and so the cross in this respect is an objective judgment-reality in the moral history of God, and of the universe.

[1] Matt. 12 : 20.

[2] Of course, this is only another way of saying that men *belong to God through Christ,* or as viewed *in Him.*

But it may be objected that such a presentation of the divine relations to man is likely to lead to easy-going views of human responsibility; as some may reason that if God be such a being as we have described,—a being who Himself has assumed (even conditional) responsibility for the sins of mankind,—then man will become indifferent to his own obligation to live as he ought. His conscience will become lax, and he will even ignore his relations to Deity.

We grant there is such a danger; but it can arise only where there is a gross abuse of the divine mercy. But be it remembered that this loving attitude of God which we have presented is, after all, for man but a *potentiality*, available only on repentance: something the benefits of which become actualized only to those who truly and surely reciprocate divine love, and this potentiality is neutralized by those who reject that love. This grace will never go into effect against a man's will, in the face of his impenitence, an impenitence which despises the very nature of the offer. God's love having its peculiarity in the fact that it undertakes to deal as the moral situation requires, with the very problem of man's sin and guilt, then a proper reciprocation of that love, even a proper faith in it, requires on man's part that he shall repent of the sin which his Lord has borne, heartily believe in the adequacy and tenderness of such a love, and henceforth surrender himself without reserve to be

the property of so complete a Saviour the moment He is known. Refusing to do this is to invite the greater condemnation, even "the second death."

But whatever lack of responsiveness in man there may be, it will yet ever remain true that in the gracious work of God's Son all the forces of sin and evil have been adequately grappled with and potentially overcome for man's benefit. Even though that salvation be rejected, the rejection will be of something actual, something brought within man's reach —a divine vicarious achievement—in which God in Christ has done all He consistently could do to save man from moral suicide.

VI

THE SOUL'S SAVING RELATION TO THE DEATH OF CHRIST

How much more shall the blood of Christ . . . cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?—*Heb.* 9:14.

WHEN once the meaning of the Cross is ascertained certain messages spring from it. With some of these I am now to deal: the message concerning personal salvation, the message respecting the nature and development of the new life, the message relative to the redemption of the body, and the message which forms the incentive and moral power in Christian missions.

I here wish to show the bearing of principles involved in the previous discussion upon the soul's individual salvation. Let us suppose we are dealing with a person who is enquiring how he shall come into a saving relation to the cross we have been considering. We shall grant that a decision is necessary, in order that the potential salvation may become actually and personally his. It may be helpful to group in their logical order a few principles underlying the decision involved.

1. The primary fact, the oldest fact in the universe of God, as concerns His relation to our race, is

the fact of the divine reconciliation. In the divine purpose, Christ was "the lamb foreordained before the foundation of the world." In its concrete outworking, of course, the reconciliation was historically consummated upon the cross of Calvary many centuries subsequent even to the fall, yet in God's heart and purpose it was eternal; it was the effect of the divine love. It was the procuring cause of salvation only, in the sense that it enabled God consistently to treat the race as His heart prompted Him to do. It is at this point that the work of Christ was vicarious. The redemption thus conceived also is no afterthought, but the ground-purpose of the universe.

2. Every soul has its existence in this world on the presupposition that a redeemer was to come into it. There would have been no creation, certainly not a fall of man, but for this eternal purpose of grace on the part of God. There is much reason for believing that the possibility of posterity to the fallen first pair, was itself conditioned on the promised "Seed" of the woman. It is strongly believed by many, that the penalty of death which was pronounced upon the sin of the first pair, embraced in it among other things the cutting short the race—at all events, the forestalling of the possibility of progeny then and there—a possibility only conserved through the promise of the coming Redeemer. It is certain that our first mother received her name "Eve" (derived from

the Hebrew word "Havvah," meaning life) as signifying "the mother of all living."[1] Was she not so named for the reason that the very possibility of descendants was linked with the promise of the Redeemer who was preëminently "the Seed"?[2] If these things be so, the continuance of the race itself was bound up with the assurance of the coming Saviour. The fall of the race as such, was therefore no impediment whatever to God's love for man, inasmuch as God loved him for what he was to become through His grace, rather than for what he was in himself considered. Having eternally purposed to take upon Himself all the cost involved in righteously saving the race, God's love was not only unimpaired by the fall, but took on its distinguishing form and ever shines out the more conspicuously through His way of overcoming that fall. There was something vastly deeper in the mind of God than the mere prevention of the fall: viz., the continuance of the race in redemptive relations to the Saviour. Therefore in the mind of God no soul exists independently of its relation to its new possibilities in Christ. Sooner or later each soul must reckon with this relation. The soul's last judgment will be such a reckoning; that reckoning however may be blessedly anticipated in the meeting by faith with Christ upon Calvary. For that purpose the cross of the reconciliation was set

[1] Gen. 3 : 20. [2] Gen. 3 : 15.

up. Each soul then in respect of the cross, has a potential salvation in Christ. This relation would be effective for all souls, were it not repudiated in selfish and wilful pride. The danger is that in very early life on account of its inherited bias to self-will, the soul will repudiate the salvation which Christ by anticipation has rendered inchoate, or incipient, a relation which He yearns to have voluntarily accepted by all for themselves. Thus Christ has preëmpted all the ground there is in human nature, so far as He can do so without infringing on human freedom. If the soul now perishes it perishes a moral suicide.

3. The provision of such a redemption, through Christ's work, also establishes a peculiar claim on the part of Christ to the mastery of every soul for whom He died. This claim calls for two things: first, repentance for the sin, even of indifference, whether it has been for a period long or short, towards those redemptive claims; and, secondly, it calls for the soul's complete abandonment in loving service to Him who has made its redemption possible. The most important fact to which a soul can awake is that in advance of its birth, Christ has been in the universe, nay, He has been here on the earth, and established His twofold claim to a penitent and grateful service. This is the first fact that should be taught a responsible child. As soon as it can know that it has earthly progenitors, so early it can be

taught that Christ has a deeper claim on it than its own parents have. On this ground then, a child is capable of very early and conscious union with Christ—much earlier than is commonly supposed. The inability of a child mentally to comprehend the philosophy of salvation, is no impediment whatever to the renewal of the soul itself. The fact of redemption in relation to itself is the chief thing it needs to know. Its will may then act upon the knowledge had. On the part of Christ, all has been done. It is for the soul to accept what is already potentially established on Christ's part, and so become in reality redeemed.

Later the child may and will come to the contemplation of the philosophy of all that has taken place in the light of the revealed word of God. On such a basis as we have shown the New Testament to afford, no one can complain because born with a sinful nature. If without one's consent one is born into the world with a bias towards evil, without one's consent also, one is born into the world the heir-presumptive of a redemptive system : that is, he has an incipient justification waiting to be actualized or annulled, as his own free will may elect. There is then no room for complaint against any supposed arbitrariness or severity on the part of God, although there is mystery in His ways. He has not only made possible the salvation of all men through the cross of His

Son, but He has also brought all men into being, the potential heirs of His grace, to be theirs forever unless in self-will they cast it from them ; and besides, He follows all with His providence and Spirit urging that the salvation immediately be appropriated and so become actual.

4. The sin, the peculiar sin, the sin most needing to be made clear, which threatens all, is not the hereditary evil which is in our nature, as descendants of Adam ; nor even the past violation of moral commandments as such ; but the sin of continued repudiation of the redemptive claim on us which Christ has acquired by His cross, and presses home by His Spirit. This is usually the last sin recognized, the sin least clearly taught by many preachers, but it is of all sins the most severely censured in the Bible, and the most offensive to God ; it is the sin of unbelief. This state of unbelief is a condition in which no soul needs to continue for a moment, as it is wholly a voluntary matter ; it is a sin to be repented of and abhorred the moment it is recognized. God's sensitive point is here. Our chief sin is that at this point we are not sensitive. He wishes us to reciprocate His sensitiveness, whereupon the blood, which represents the depth, the cost and the freeness of divine love, can cleanse even a Lady Macbeth's red hand.

5. Considerations like the above, the moment they are understood present a dilemma, a crisis, wherein

the soul must decide either for or against Jesus Christ, whether it will or not. The issue is divinely occasioned: the soul is placed there by God Himself, under conditions however the most gracious. Neutrality is impossible. A decision must be made. The soul must either yield to Christ's claims, acquired by His cross, or ignore those claims, and thus contract a deeper guilt; even that of participation in the guilt of the crucifiers of Jesus. The assumption that one may be indifferent to the situation is virtually to reject the Saviour. Constructively then, in spirit, one either washes his hand of all part in the crucifixion of Jesus, by accepting Him as Saviour and Lord, or he allows himself to be a partaker of the crime of those who "crucified the Lord of Glory."[1] As represented in the Epistle to the Hebrews, he counts "the blood of the covenant wherewith He was sanctified an unholy (*i. e.*, a profane) thing,"[2] he treads it underfoot; and this is to be guilty of the grossest sacrilege.

The question on which all will turn at the last judgment, will be, how one has treated Him who hung upon the reconciling cross. Hence the importance of immediate and habitual right attitude towards the cross of Christ, whether implicit in God's nature, or as concretely and graphically depicted, in the historic redeeming work of Calvary.

[1] 1 Cor. 2: 8. [2] Heb. 10: 29.

Two contrasting pictures in the Old Testament may serve to illustrate the differing relations to so sacred a matter as that before us.

In the Book of Daniel we are introduced to a scene in which "Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords and drank wine before the thousand."[1] This Belshazzar was an idolater; he was gluttonous, licentious, and a wine-bibber; but his chief sin lay deeper than all this; the spirit of evil that was in him drove him one step further before his cup of iniquity was full. "Belshazzar while he tasted the wine" of his heathen festival bethought him of an especially profane gratification, namely, to send for "the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the Temple which was at Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink therefrom."[2] This he carried out. He and his wives and his concubines went to such a length of revelry—that they drank their wine and praised their false gods in the *use of these sacred vessels* of the Temple. It was for this reason,—for their sacrilegious prostitution of the highest sanctities they knew—that "*in the same hour*" there "came forth the fingers of a man's hand and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace"[3] the doom of his kingdom. It was this sacrilege of Belshazzar that

[1] Dan. 5 : 1. [2] Dan. 5 : 5. [3] Dan. 5 : 2.

destroyed Babylon. It is a similar sacrilege, incipient in unbelief respecting Christ's consecrated cross and all true relation to it,—that unbelief which refuses to take seriously obligation to the redeeming Christ—that constitutes the sin of sins, and itself involves spiritual destruction.

Now turning to the Book of Ezra, we find a picture setting forth a principle in exalted contrast to all this: Cyrus the king of Persia comes upon the scene: A spirit different from Belshazzar's is stirring in him; it moves him to make "a proclamation throughout all his kingdom," [1] that the God of Heaven had charged him to assist in the rebuilding of that same holy Jewish Temple which the Babylonian kings had sacked and destroyed. All the arrangements are put in trust of "the heads of the house of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites." [2] Then at the psychological moment, before the caravan starts across the deserts to the Holy City, this Cyrus, the King—so unlike Belshazzar the profane,—*brought forth those same vessels* of the house of Jehovah which Nebuchadnezzar had abducted from Jerusalem, *even those* did "Cyrus the king bring forth by the hand of Mithredath, the treasurer, and *numbered them* unto Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah." And with what painstaking care this was done. The vessels were told off with mathematical exactness and set in array—

[1] Ezra 1: 1. [2] Ezra 1: 5.

"thirty platters of gold, one thousand platters of silver, nine and twenty knives, thirty bowls of gold, silver bowls of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels one thousand," [1] and so on, until all the sacred implements to the number of five thousand four hundred were carefully put in charge of the proper custodian for their home-bringing.

Thus in utter contrast to Belshazzar's profaneness did Cyrus treat those same vessels—belongings of a redemptive economy, the sacred plate of the redemptive Temple, significant of service to a Redeemer. The stately pageant moves forth on the long journey westward, the Temple utensils borne at the head of the column, on the long august processional. The consecration in form indeed was Persian, but in spirit and meaning deeply Christian.

In all this King Cyrus may be taken to symbolize the divinely intended relation of all men to the holy Saviour, a relation preëmpted to God through what Christ is and does through His cross. All men are expected to choose respecting the two alternatives; whether they will identify themselves with the unbelieving sacrilege exhibited by Belshazzar, or with the worshipful faith represented by Cyrus, who eschewed all selfish claim on the divinely devoted, and made haste to secure its cordial return to its true possessor and Lord.

[1] Ezra 1 : 9, 10, 11.

After the death of President Garfield, falling as he did in the waiting-room of the railroad station in Washington, the authorities removed from the paved floor the tile on which the blood of the martyred President had dropped, and inserted in its place a brass star to mark the spot so consecrated. Thenceforth no person who revered the memory of Garfield would carelessly set foot upon that emblem. Indeed, so long as the star remained in that floor, such crowds of people could be seen almost any day standing about the symbol, awestruck with interest, that eventually the authorities were obliged to remove the star, to prevent obstruction of passage through the room. The spell of the life-ideals that marked Garfield's devotion, even unto death, so held the people to an attitude of reverential honour to all that the slain President stood for.

The earth into which we and our children are born is thickly sown, permanently sown, so to speak, on every spot where man may tread, with stars speaking of the cleansing and sanctifying symbolic blood wherewith Christ has asserted His claim to the world and all things in it. Since this is so, our very selves and all our relationships are adjudged unto Christ. Step where we may, to right or left, behind or before, we tread upon sanctities which belong to Him. We tread upon stars, nay, we tread upon blood, nay, more, we tread upon life, the life of the very sacri-

ficial Son of God! We cannot do otherwise, because this world in which we live is a potentially redeemed world; and there is no logical place in it for those who repudiate redemption. Its sanctities are upon everything we touch; and it is our first duty to believe and act in consonance therewith.

But how shall we come to the point of such a consecration? We are, as we have seen, face to face with a dilemma: we are shut up to one of two alternatives: there is no third. If we live at all, either we must profanely put these stars, these sanctities, beneath our feet in continued gratification of pride and self-will, which is unbelief; or we must regard these sanctities as a divinely prepared star-set pavement, and commit ourselves to all it implies. As redeemed souls, we must trust and use this standing ground as did Solomon his glorious "ascent" to the Temple, and so find union and fellowship with God. No middle ground is possible. We must either ignore this Son of God and His sanctifying blood,—that is, His sacrificial life,—or we must by faith honour the stars our feet have pressed as a gracious saving provision on which we will depend for salvation. To be saved, we are to confess the sacrilege involved in the denial of our life as ransomed, and then, by an all-decisive act of will, give ourselves over to the transforming spell of the Redeemer's cross and all to which it constrains.

After these two alternatives, the profane and the sacred, are once seen, no soul can take a single step forward or backward, to right or left, acceptable to God, until by faith he recognizes the highway of grace and begins to walk thereon with penitent and holy feet. Every step taken in any other spirit is repudiation and contempt of the divine love. Thus by repentance to abjure our implicit part in the sacrilege of the crucifiers of the Lord Jesus on the one hand, and by faith to unite ourselves penitently and reverently with the risen Redeemer on the other, is to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" :[1] to believe "with the heart unto righteousness."[2] This is to realize the purging of the "conscience from dead works to serve the living God."[3] This it is to enter into the potential sanctification of the heavenly life in reserve for all those who by faith will receive it.

[1] Acts 16 : 31. [2] Rom. 10 : 10. [3] Heb. 9 : 14.

VII

THE LIFE OF SELF-CRUCIFIXION WITH CHRIST

I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me.—*Gal.* 2 : 20.

In this chapter, I shall deal with the message of the cross of Christ respecting the spiritual life as the habit of our new being. This life I have designated as the life of self-crucifixion with Christ: it might be styled "the self-crucified life in Christ." This phrasing implies that the normal life of believers is closely related to the objective cross on which hitherto I have placed so constant emphasis. In the preceding discussion I have everywhere implied that he who accepts Christ's reconciling work as the ground of His justification, is, in the purpose of God, committed to new and unique subjection to Christ's Lordship. This is an implicate of faith. Doubtless, tendencies to presume upon the vicariousness of Christ's objective work as a reason for careless living have sometimes arisen. The reconciliation of Christ is intended to form a motive for the highest holiness. Any view of that work which is so stated as to have any other effect must be a perverted view. Such a

perversion Paul had in mind when, in the course of his argument in the Epistle to the Romans, he enquires, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" [1]—an inference which he promptly repudiates.

It is this matter which I now wish to make clear.

The evangelical conception of salvation is twofold: It embraces (1) a whole-hearted reliance by faith on the age-long achievement of reconciliation wrought out by God Himself through Christ's cross, objectively considered; and (2) a renewed life in the inward man, the fruit of God's Spirit, subjectively developed. It is common to speak of the first of these two aspects of salvation as Christ's "finished work." "Now once at the end of the ages hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." [2]

Salvation in the full meaning of the term, however, in the Scriptures is not conceived as a completed process when the soul at the central crisis of its religious history believes on this finished work of Christ. Rather that is the point at which its new life begins. Christ's finished reconciliation is the basis of all; but it is by no means all that the grace of God contemplates for us. Because Christ gave Himself to be a sin-offering for us, it is not to be inferred that this discharges the believer from the fulfillment of the law

[1] Rom. 6:1. [2] Heb. 9:26.

of holiness: "That the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."[1] The work of Christ rather commits the believer, preëmpts him,—so to speak, mortgages him,—to holiness, as nothing else possibly could; nay more, it even prescribes the norm according to which the new life is to be devoted to God; that norm is found in the lengths to which Christ's holy will went in dealing with the sin-problem, even unto death.

As God in Christ spared not Himself, so we who believe are to spare not ourselves in conformity to our Redeemer's will. The unsparing devotion of Christ to us is to be reciprocated in the power of the divine Spirit. We are to stop not short of complete crucifixion to everything that stands between us and obedience to His will. The Pauline confession is the ideal expression of it: "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live; but Christ liveth in me, and that life which I now live in the flesh, I live in the faith which is in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up for me."[2] Said the eloquent French preacher Lacordaire, "The church was born crucified."

The spiritual life, strictly speaking, begins here with the principle of self-renunciation unto death. It is a principle learned and a power engendered at the cross; for no one really believes on Christ who

[1] Rom. 8:4. [2] Gal 2:20.

impliedly does not also yield himself in surrendered will to Him,—even dies with Him to self and sin. Moreover, each step in the spiritual life is taken on the same principle on which the first step was taken. The Holy Spirit cannot get into the soul to do its characteristic work of renewal and progressive sanctification except as there is death to what is known to be contrary to Christ. This is to become the habit of the new life.

When Christ went to the cross for us, He did it with absolute voluntariness. Having once come in the flesh, and set His face steadfastly towards Jerusalem, He wavered not from the all consuming purpose. Anything and everything which lay between Him and the goal: the unbelief and enmity of men, the seductions of the flesh and the world, and the sophistries of their prince, He unflinchingly encountered. He suffered not only what was incidental to His message, as a prophet: this would have been simply to endure the inflictions of the crucifixion—mere martyrdom.

The Saviour also suffered in a far profounder way: He suffered all that was necessary, in order adequately to deal with the awful sin-problem; and this He endured vicariously. Now he who sees this as a work of grace wrought for Him; who has accepted it in gratitude and under the influence of the Spirit of God, will give himself into subjection to the one who has

so redeemed him. He will, according to the very terms of the new nature, hate everything which would, if repeated, virtually recrucify Christ; hence results the new voluntariness developed in the regenerate soul. This new spontaneity created by the Spirit of God within the man is the same thing in kind as that which animated Christ in the incarnation throughout His reconciling work: it is essential God-likeness—a new nature; it is entirely a fruit of grace, and in no sense a work of merit which man has achieved. It is at this point that a new divinely-ethical quality is developed in the soul; it results in a new character. It is not, however, character in that naturalistic and superficial sense in which the term is often used, when it is said the soul is "saved by character" as if apart from the grace of God. Christ indeed never purposed to save any soul even by grace in such a way as would ignore the recreation of character by His own Spirit. It is, however, just as true to say that Christ in saving the sinner vicariously through His reconciling work, from the judgment and curse of his sin, has so done it as implies the correlative work of reconstituting the character of the believer. "For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." [1] In this aspect of the case we are "justified by works," [2] but they are works which

[1] Eph. 2 : 10. [2] James 2 : 21, 24.

themselves are the fruit of the spirit through faith, the correlative of faith, the product of grace rather than the procuring cause of it. Salvation by such *works of faith* is therefore a very different thing from salvation by works of law or by natural character. It is a salvation which stands in organic relation to the work which Christ objectively effected for us through His cross.

The explication above given may seem needless to those deeply initiated in the evangelical principle. So vague, however, has become much reference to the cross of Christ, even in evangelical pulpits, and so erroneous is the teaching in many recent works touching the atonement that great popular confusion exists,[1] and the most studious and careful restatements seem to be requisite to clear the air. It has become distressingly common to find reputed exponents of supposedly evangelical faith putting an emphasis upon natural ethics which altogether ignores their relation to the work of Christ's cross, and even puts them in contradiction to it. Evidently in such cases, the cross of Christ itself is sadly misunderstood, and however unintentionally, disastrously misconstrued to the minds of the unsuspecting.

[1] For example, in the late work of Prof. G. B. Stevens of Yale on "The Christian Doctrine of Salvation," a sharp antithesis is made between the penal and the ethical aspects of the atonement; whereas in the New Testament they are simply complemental. They are by no means exclusive of each other.

During the past twenty-five years there has been at work in this country as well as in Europe a particularly subtle form of error to which it is important to give attention, inasmuch as its fundamental positions are such as logically involve the whole question of the nature and validity of the spiritual life ; and we cannot afford to pass it by. I refer to the system of thought known as Ritschlianism. This system was promulgated in Göttingen, Germany, about a generation ago, by Prof. Albrecht Ritschl ; it has been enlarged upon or modified by Hermann, Kaftan, Schultz and others in Germany. It has had a fresh restatement by Auguste Sabatier, a professor in Paris, as recently as 1899, and has many followers in England and America, among whom are Professor McGiffert of Union Theological Seminary, New York, Prof. Wm. Newton Clarke of Colgate University, Prof. George B. Foster of the University of Chicago, and others. The system is a strange compound of speculative agnosticism and religious pietism—really a system of religio-philosophy so unlike the Christianity of the New Testament as to be scarcely recognizable. The system roots itself in the speculative idealism of Immanuel Kant, promulgated in Germany over a century ago, but has had currency in all skeptical thought since Plotinus the Grecian, who lived over fifteen hundred years ago.

Kant in his "Kritik of Pure Reason" maintained

that "the mind can cognize nothing but the working of its own faculties in the subjective realm," as Plotinus before him had said: "With me the act of contemplation makes the thing contemplated." This view of the pagan philosopher repeated by Kant was the forerunner of the whole series of idealistic philosophies of Berkeley, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, down to the present day. The motif of this one-sided doctrine has been to eliminate the supernatural element in Christianity, and even to deny reality to the objective world, including all those supersensible, even necessary conceptions concerning Deity and His attributes, the Trinity, the moral government of the world, and the person and work of Christ, which constitute the warp and woof of divine revelation. Even Kant, when he found how destructive his negations were, felt obliged to find a way of retreat; and so he wrote a second treatise called "Practical Reason." In this work he admitted the validity of man's moral nature and of a moral purpose in the world which compel us to postulate God. He found a place for what he called "The Categorical Imperative," and so Kant himself practically disowned his former position. Dr. McCosh as representing the Realistic School of Philosophy, says of Kant's original doctrine: "It is one of the most fatal dogmas opposed to the revelations of consciousness ever introduced into philosophy, and lies at the basis of all

the aberrations in the schools of speculation which followed."

Professor Seth (Scottish Philosophy) says: "Kant is the *fons et origo* of the most cultivated agnosticism of the day."

Ritschl, however, did not yield so much as did Kant, his master, in his second treatise. Accordingly, the Ritschlian system proceeded to build itself up on its exclusive subjectivism in the religious realm, and easily falling in with an extreme evolutionary philosophy reared a system of religion filled with denials of fundamental and necessary truths. This system, even though embracing certain half-truths, cannot possibly live without subverting the very Christian foundations.

This system in its first principles is a most radical departure from what has ever been received as historic Christianity. Its attitude on all the objective verities of revelation is radical and revolutionary; and if so the objective reconciling work of Christ is set aside, and of course the conception of the spiritual life ensuing would be a vastly different thing from that for which I am contending.

Now as antecedent to any worthy conception of the redeeming work of Christ, there is a wide realm of objective reality presupposed in the Scriptures and reasserted in our own moral natures, that must be reckoned with. The doctrine of God as an absolute

and independent Being, with certain necessary attributes, His Trinity, the divine providential government of the world, the fact and nature of sin, the person of Christ as the Eternal Logos, preëxistent, incarnate, dead, risen and redeeming, and questions of human destiny impending: all these are presupposed.

These *Biblical* and *morally* necessary presuppositions, however, the Ritschlian scheme entirely ignores and substitutes in lieu thereof a series of *philosophical* assumptions diametrically opposed to them. I here note five negative and characteristic postulates of the scheme which it is important to keep in mind if the real issue between Ritschlianism and the more Biblical evangelical system is to be understood.

(1) Ritschlians deny the essential nature of God as an absolute and truly Sovereign being. At all events, they deny that we can know Him as such. Ritschl wholly misconceives God's Sovereignty: he thinks of it as if it were founded on might and arbitrary will, as giving Him private rights against His creatures. How indeed God could be God and not be Sovereign with certain necessary attributes, we cannot imagine. God alone is and must be the one independent being, if we are to have a God at all. All such moral necessity in God as requires that He must "act worthily of Himself," "have regard to His own holiness," "punish the ungodly, etc.," Ritschlians say imply

qualities which can belong only to "a finite and becoming personality"; and these qualities are derogatory to Deity. Now if the necessity in God referred to meant a necessity *imposed* on Him from without—something indeed quite unthinkable—absoluteness in God would of course be destroyed. The necessity of which we speak however being a necessity of God's nature, there is no implication of finiteness. And this sort of necessity in God, our own moral nature, as well as the Bible, affirms.

(2) But Ritschlianism entertains also the most revolutionary views respecting the divine government. This would naturally spring from its failure to conceive of God as a being, having necessary principles of action within Himself. It is held that without any necessary elements in God's government as such, there is possible a personal and more ethical relation between God and man, and yet this is something entirely above and apart from any principles of law. But since Ritschl has no principles in God on which to base any conception of government intelligible to reason, or the moral sense, there is nothing left but governmental chaos upon which to found his ethics. Any ethics which in the end do not comport with the essential moral constitution of God are a pure fiction and worthless. The ethical ends which each individual has to work out are determined by some form of command or authority in God, and this

comports with the expression which God has made of Himself in the work of Jesus Christ. Indeed Ritschl's ultimate agnosticism incapacitates him for any serious investigation of the proper relation between the soul and God, in which case again his notion of ethics is shown to be arbitrary and fictitious. By "law" Ritschl and his followers generally understand a mere formal statute such as was enacted under Moses for some secondary purpose. They are given to speaking of "forensic" and "juridical" conceptions of law as quite artificial; but the fundamental idea embraced in divine law—that law which is what it is because of what God is in His essential holy being—is not so easily disposed of. If the universe has any foundation principle whatever, that principle is *law*, however we name it, of which indeed, forensic expressions may be made, but it is law nevertheless: the universe is based on it, and any righteous or sensible system of salvation must reckon with it. Grant that these juridical aspects of civil law are but partial; they are however true as far as they go; in so far as they are true, they are so because they are reflections of the everlasting moral realities in God, rescripts of His being. Our very moral natures compel us to see them, and obey them, because they are written within us. When, therefore, the Bible presents the reconciling work of Christ in form and terms involving judicial elements, they instinctively com-

mend themselves to us as true. It is only by some arbitrary make-believe, such as Ritschl would impose upon us, that we can avoid this and not destroy the very foundations of all religious belief. If there is no moral standard in God's government, it is of course idle to talk of an atonement or a spiritual life as dependent on it. The attempt to get away from the government of God thus judicially conceived, as the Bible puts it, is done at a ruinous cost to fundamental conceptions of religion.

(3) From this, Ritschlianism easily passes to an entirely revolutionary view of sin and its proper *judgment*. The Bible teaches that sin is essentially a self-contradictory and unworthy self-determination in relation to God. Man was created dependent on God and subject to Him. His highest well-being was to be found in loyally continuing in this relation under the tests imposed. When Jesus, the second Adam, came, He perfectly illustrated that attitude. Man in the garden however revolted from God, and of course from the highest law of his own well-being also. This was sin. It was not the mere remains of animalism in him as some evolutionists teach. It was willful rebellion against God. It began in a lie and it culminated in self-destruction. It virtually dethroned God and enthroned man in His stead. A sin like this, therefore, logically implied the overthrow of all right-

eous government and the incoming of chaos instead: but this, Ritschlianism scouts. Sin is not so serious a thing; hence, of course Ritschl denies any final retribution for mankind. He takes a single passage like that in which God in His providence is said to make "His sun to rise on the evil and the good,"[1] and from it draws the sweeping inference that there can be no final retribution to the wicked. To thus state this case is to refute it. A God who has no law of holiness in Himself, who has no government or system of order antecedent to man's creation, of course logically can never be thought of as being a final judge of mankind in any serious sense. Nor can there be any other such judge. Ritschl's premises granted, of course his conclusion follows, and it is worth less than the guess of the most arrant pagan in all the world. It is absolutely destructive of all normal religious thought.

(4) But Ritschlianism has departed just as far from reality in its conception of the love of God. In the Bible the love of God is set forth as that expression of His nature and grace which has dealt adequately with our sin and guilt,—so dealt with it as to save unto the uttermost the believing sinner, and to do it in perfect consistency with His holiness. The divine love loses its central meaning when you take out of it the fact and the manner in which God

[1] Matt. 5: 45.

undertakes to become responsible for our rescue from sin. God's love is not that of a great characterless indulgence of the sinner. God hates sin and must do it. Neither is God's love a mere arbitrary choosing of our final felicity irrespective of the way of reaching it—what Ritschl calls God's "self-end." Even God cannot act selfishly or in an unprincipled way. He "cannot deny Himself." [1] He cannot look upon sin and yet He can love, only that love is not an arbitrary capriciously chosen something. It would be immoral in God to hesitate to punish sin. Hence, from the necessities of the case He must find the way to be just, if He is to justify the ungodly. His love, therefore, is measured by the way in which He undertook it and the lengths to which He went in the self-sacrifice of His Son to compass the great difficulty. But Ritschlians say: "No!" God's love is simply an expression of His will without regard to any law in Himself, any principle of government which He needs to regard, any deep-rooted moral obliquity in the sinner, or any likelihood of an impending doom which man deserves. God can simply *will* man's blessedness in an arbitrary way. Hence, the characteristic expression, "the will of love" in Ritschl's vocabulary. But such a conception of love in the light of the Scriptures, and even of a normal human conscience, is purely fanciful, and being

[1] 2 Tim. 2:13.

grounded not on principles inherent in God, but purely sentimental, can never have power to produce profound repentance. Repentance, at its heart, is such a sorrow for sin as recoils from it under the sense of the horror of what it cost the Son of God to redeem from it. Of course, then, with Ritschl's superficial conception of love as mere sentimentality in God, he would necessarily make light of any objective atonement.

(5) But Ritschlianism goes even further than this. It denies to the person of Christ His proper divine-human character which has always been deemed essential to any competency in the Redeemer for effecting an adequate reconciliation as between God and sinful man. Some of Ritschl's followers, for example, Prof. George B. Foster of Chicago, entirely deny that Jesus was the Messiah in any real acceptation of that term. He even disputes that Jesus claimed Messiahship, and with this denial this class of thinkers set aside all the historic grounds at least,[1] on which one can retain any real confidence in Christ as a trustworthy prophet, even a revealer of ultimate divine realities, to say nothing of His reliability as a Saviour. Professor Clarke of Colgate, in his latest book, "The Use of the Scriptures in Theology," boldly intimates that Jesus in His eschatological discourses

[1] And this they try to dignify by calling it a product of "*scientific* historical criticism."

was under the Judaistic prepossessions peculiar to His time, and so might easily have been mistaken in respect to matters of fact concerning His own Kingdom. Of what worth, then, could anything effected by Him be which, in the nature of the case, must deal with the deepest moral and spiritual realities of the universe? From such an estimate of Christ's person, as viewed by these representative Ritschlians, it is, of course, an easy step to the denial of the spiritual life as connected with Christ's atoning death. Certainly, with such subversion of ideas and principles, principles which lie at the basis of that conception of the objective reconciling work of Christ, which has historically prevailed throughout the Christian era, it would be vain to speak of a conception of a spiritual life as dependent on it or regulated by it.

It is undoubted that Ritschl had an earnest religious motive for shaping and presenting his system of thought as he did. He meant to place a strong emphasis on the development of the subjective spiritual life. His aim in this respect was worthy, although the basis which he conceived for it was laid in a hasty acceptance of the conclusions of pseudo-science, and with little regard for that divine reconciliation in Christ which the Christian Scriptures set forth.

The emphasis which Ritschl intended to give to the subjective spiritual life might have been secured

in a much better way, and without paying a fatal obeisance to a non-Christian philosophy. Such an emphasis has been maintained in the saner and historic Christian thought of British and American theologians. Indeed, all the historically great evangelical leaders have so preserved it. It has been done among the sober types of Pietists in Germany, in the great evangelical circles of Britain by preachers like Chalmers, Rutherford, McCheyne, Guthrie and the Bonars; in England by Bunyan, Whitfield, Wesley, Spurgeon, MacLaren and Parker; in America by Edwards, Lyman Beecher, Finney, Park, Wayland, Kirk, Robinson, Northrup, Hovey, Strong, and a host of their compeers; and it has been preserved in all the great foreign missionary apostolates of the world.

On general principles, therefore, it would seem rather late in the day to promulgate so revolutionary a reconstruction in religion, and that grounded in a most incredible philosophy, so inconsistent with the fundamental postulates of historical Christianity. The indemnity required in philosophic and moral results is too ruinous to be contemplated by any sound philosophic mind.

But as concerns the more practical side of Ritschlianism even, the writer affirms his belief that both in the case of Ritschl and of the most conscientious interpreters of his system, this subjective position in

which they would rest their case, even if they could well secure it on their grounds, represents at best only a half-way house on the way to faith. Neither is it a new thing "under the sun." Many evangelical minds in the process of their spiritual history, after some temporary eclipse of faith, have undergone one or more radical experiential crises. Such earnest souls, after they have emerged, have commonly found themselves, for a period, unduly engrossed with the subjective elements in that experience. The writer once had such a prolonged period of engrossment, from which with difficulty he recovered himself.[1] The recovery was found by return to certain objective truths in divine revelation which for the time had been obscured. A grave peril always attends even a real Christian experience, namely, the peril that it may relatively be over-accentuated so that in the end the complemental, foundational, and regulative objective truth will be lost sight of. It may be but a sophomorical stage in Christian education.

It is in the combination of these two things, the inward subjective submission of the will and the objectively revealed Scriptures, that the deeper and growing realizations in religion are found. If I were asked wherein is found the seat of authority in religion, I would answer,—in the proper relating of

[1] See Appendix.

the soul's subjective attitude to the objectively revealed Scriptures, which will result in an assurance born of such union. The seat of authority is not found in the one without the other—but in the two combined in a proper correspondence. The primary emphasis however with finite and reasonable minds must ever be upon the revealed Scriptures. Human feelings and experiences fluctuate, but "the word of the Lord abideth forever."[1] "And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye *do well that ye take heed*, as unto a *lamp shining in a dark place until* the day dawn, and the day-star arise *in your hearts*."[2] This "more sure word of prophecy" must ever be the corrective of man's fickle aberrations or partial realizations, whereas the assumption that the Scriptures are to be corrected by the presuppositions of subjective states is as if one were to assume to regulate the sun by his watch.

Now in my belief, the tendency of this Ritschlian movement, even at its best, is one-sided and misleading. In so far as the movement has been taken up by the younger men who have not yet passed through very serious soul crises, and themselves become the possessors of the deeper experiences of life, this system is likely to become a mere sounding sentimentalism,—a fad of the hour—the influence of which in the end will prove mischievous and blighting. With

[1] 1 Peter 1 : 25. [2] 2 Peter 1 : 19.

some this same Ritschlianism is a mere naturalistic device for getting rid of miracle and other great elements in the Christian revelation which are above reason, and which must be accepted by faith or denied altogether. Granted if we advance in the school born of deeper life, we must inevitably pass through stages of thought and realization emphatically subjective; yet these stages are not finality in Christian development, nor is it safe to make them of themselves data for the religious guidance of others.

In Dr. P. T. Forsyth's great paper on "The Cross as the Final Seat of Authority," referred to in the introduction, he has a striking paragraph which illustrates the reality of the crisis-principle which lies at the basis of the subjectivism with which we have been dealing, but with correct implications, as connected with the objective cross.

Dr. Forsyth's thought somewhat abbreviated is for substance as follows: "There comes a time when the sense of authority respecting the externals of faith such as the authority of the church, or the Bible as a canon, seems to fail. In such event authority must be replaced or born anew in the soul through the subjective realm. The new universal can be found only in the soul's interior; a new man arises from a broken man—out of the soul's chaos and night. The soul comes to a dilemma which stakes the whole future upon an 'either, or': the self-complacency of

the soul is annihilated, and becomes shut up unto the new authority of a personal Redeemer. The soul drawn into a corner of its interior sees no world for it in the outward—except through a creative miracle of personal rescue and grace. The soul then rises redeemed, and rescued by a saving catastrophe; by a decisive and divine intervention more miraculous than evolutionary,—a veritable miracle worked on the will. Thus the cross becomes the new seat of the soul's authority,—the cross as Christ crucified afresh in the evangelical experience of the desperate soul, and rising anew in its new trust and life."

This restorative experience through which many have to pass can be described in terms no less paradoxical. Tarrying too long however in such a subjective experience as if it were an end in itself, our Christian life ceases to be healthful and growthful.

In a very recent utterance, Dr. Forsyth quoted above, substantially says that "the authority of the inward godly consciousness is of itself inadequate. The experimental test of Christianity, valuable as it is, is defective because faith is an *obedience*—a submission to a real objective with a right and power to rule us from the centre. The essential thing is the object of faith, not the subject of experience. Preach an objective word and leave *it* to deal with the saint and sinner as *it* will: make conscious the power of Christ."

When the old sensation which took possession of Peter on the Mount tempts us, and we find ourselves saying, It is good to be here; let us build tabernacles[1] for permanent abode in what is intended to be but a passing experience on the way to something better, we need only to understand our Lord better to see yet greater wonders wrought by the divine hand in the plain.

The principle of normal relation of the subjective to the objective is finely covered by the teaching of the Apostle James in his epistle, in a passage which might be entitled "The Divine Basis of Christian Experience." The apostle is exhorting the disciple to *maintain the right relation to the word of God.* Accordingly, he exhorts: "Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing (or remainders) of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls (lives); but be ye *doers of the word* and not hearers only, deluding your own selves."[2]

In this passage, the apostle virtually says that when one's eye has become directed to some objective Biblical command or duty, two attitudes towards it are possible; the one attitude will be, having heard the word, to *set up a process of reasoning* about it. The mind is tempted to say to itself, "Yes, I hear the word, but I think, people say, what if I should

[1] Luke 9:33. [2] James 1:22.

obey, etc., etc." And immediately the mind, so reasoning with itself in face of plain objective duty, deceives itself, makes a false reckoning, reasons itself astray; and this always, invariably, occurs to one who sets his own reasonings and speculations over against a plain teaching of the divine word. It is on account of this habit that most Christians, even, have so little Christian experience. The other alternative possible to one who hears the word is instantly to obey, to act upon the truth presented, to do the will of God implied, and the one who thus acts will be surely blessed. The result is a fresh experience. The natural order of this process is indicated by three striking phrases in the passage above quoted: viz., a *word-hearer*, a *word-doer*, a *work-doer*. There is the *hearing* of the word, the *doing* of the word, and a *working energy*, result of a divine operation wrought in the soul by the same Spirit that indited the word. This is Christian experience in its very essence; and it is obtained by preserving the proper correlation between the soul in its subjective attitude and the objective truth, which stands without, requiring compliance with it. Moreover, an experience thus begun in the soul is to be repeated and continued as the realm of objective truth enlarges to the sincere seeker after it, and his spirit becomes habituated to conform to it. Progressive and healthful Christian experience is possible in no other way; it is thus that "the

path of the righteous is as the dawning light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." [1]

There is this difference between the Ritschlian idea of a "mediated" (or experienced) truth and the view for which I am contending. My position is that, in yielding to the authority of an objective truth of divine revelation, one yields to Christ; he dies to self-will which has hitherto stood outside the truth; and in so dying the Divine Spirit quickens or makes alive by resurrection power the soul thus surrendered; whereas in the Ritschlian view there is simply a naturalistic act of will standing on its own energy, without any Divine Spirit to make the dead to live again.

Prof. George B. Foster, for example, in his "Finality of the Christian Religion," the latest expression of Ritschlianism in this country, says that the faculty through which we know God at the centre is the will. He says this in the interest of a basic Ritschlian position, which would eliminate and not merely subordinate the metaphysical element in all approach to God; but in so doing he appears to exalt the will to an original self-dependent power, which of itself, irrespective of divinely revealed ends, would have moral worth and efficiency; as if a mere self-determination, irrespective of relation to the will of God, could in itself be effective and sufficient, by simply "willing" it. Professor Foster is in line with

[1] Prov. 4:18.

Ritschl here. In thus locating in the will what he withdraws from reason, Professor Foster assumes that the will itself, apart from the reason, is a *knowing faculty;* that it has efficiency and worth apart from God, to know God. If Professor Foster were to teach that, through the submission of the will, together with all other faculties of the soul in a composite action Godward, the grace of salvation would thereupon be unveiled to a new insight born of the Holy Spirit, we could agree. In such a case, the right attitude of the will is the central element in faith, for faith is an executive act, although it is withal a *surrendering* act of the entire soul. But the will itself has *no cognitive efficiency per se*, and in the form in which Professor Foster relates it to practical religion, he entirely leaves out of view the realm of grace, with the work of the Divine Spirit, and the mystical disclosure of God thereby made to the soul. All these are fundamental realities in the religion which the Bible reveals, and to deny or even ignore them is to destroy Christianity. It is a vain and fatal mystifying of the whole matter of religion as something to be experienced, to conceive of it as something which the will itself, by its own self-dependent efficiency, can seize upon and reckon as a moral asset, independent of the grace of God. Certainly, such an act of will is in entire contradiction to the cross of Christ as the Scriptures teach it and all it implies of new re-

creative power, that power of the Spirit of Pentecost.

Says Professor Cremer: "It is not as if our will conditioned and effected our faith; our volition effects the disbelief, whereas Jesus by His presence (when He enters the heart) effects the faith."

The attempt of Ritschlians to press too far the element of half-truth in their system must not be overvalued because of the confessed religious spirit in which it treats of the soul's personal relation to Christ as a Saviour and as the Head of an ethical community. The misleading element in the system is the more specious on that account. It seeks to keep the life of religion without its proper correlative realities which reside in the cross of the Redeemer, and in the Holy Spirit which sets its special seal on the work and preaching of that cross. It would absorb the heat from the sun, but practically deny the very existence of the orb itself, as well as the energies by which it relates itself to us. Perhaps it is the more fascinating to certain types of mind because it is so purely subjective and vague; it is certainly disregardful of a system of grace.

I have thus dwelt on the nature of the Ritschlian hypothesis to show how radical and revolutionary it is as respects the work of Christ's cross, because when this is once seen, it will be apparent that the entire basis of the inner Christian life is altered, if not des-

troyed ; and Bible-loving men will the sooner be recovered from its snare. Now over against this Ritschlian view, the Scriptures teach that the spiritual life is essentially the response of faith to grace—to grace as conditioned in the reconciling work of Christ's cross.

On the occasion of Emerson's first visit to Carlyle in Britain, they went together to the Lake District in Wordsworth's country. They wandered about and conversed much of the immortality of the soul and related themes. On one occasion, all at once Carlyle looked up and remarked : "Christ died on the tree : that built Dunscore Kirk yonder : that brought you and me together." Thus spoke the rugged old Scotch moralist, none too strongly, concerning the constructive power of the Cross in history. But if it be true that the cross has been the formative, not to say reformative, agency in all the great history of our era, it is just as true that that historic cross must ever be the central power for the renewal of man's inner life.

The spiritual life is so dependent on its relation to Christ's cross because man requires for his moral reconstruction a process no less radical than that implied in an experience of moral death and resurrection, and this principle is the very core also of historic Christianity. When Jesus came to the Jordan unto John to request baptism at his hands and John

remonstrated, Jesus replied : "Suffer it to be so now : for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." [1] Jesus was anticipating the coming baptism of death and every word used by Him was full of significance ; indeed in my view, He was here adopting the heraldry of His Kingdom,—a sign, the sign-manual of that which was central in it. He was speaking of the way in which the sum total of evangelical righteousness may be fulfilled, and so he says : "Thus it becometh us, etc." It became Jesus, in order that He might become officially qualified to be the head of the new race, to die and live again ; and it becomes us if we are to appropriate His redeeming work likewise, to die and live again with Him. Moreover, Jesus describes the process by using an adverb "thus" ; He has in mind a *form* of truth, a symbol. If I may paraphrase His meaning, He said : "Thus —by a process of dying and living again expressed in this symbol of My baptism, it becometh us—both Myself and My disciples in a joint relationship—to fill full the complete evangelical righteousness." In evangelical righteousness, there are three factors : (1) The objective death and resurrection of Jesus for us, on which we believe ; (2) the subjective spiritual dying and living again which habitually takes place in us ; and (3) the death and the resurrection (or translation) of believers which will occur when

[1] Matt. 3 : 15.

the Lord shall come again "apart from sin unto salvation."[1] Other than this hope of final holiness for sinful man, there is none. But this, thank God! every soul may have through right relation to Christ's cross.

There is thus no premium placed by Jesus on the efficacy of conformity to a mere rite as such, however great be its value as a sign; but He is magnifying the combined historical and experimental transactions whereby the believing disciple is to be conformed to His death and resurrection. Thus He forever binds into organic union His historic cross and the true subjective spiritual life. In this light, therefore, the life of self-crucifixion with Christ is seen to be in the closest organic relation to His objective death and resurrection.

The New Testament basis of the spiritual life on the subjective side consists in three things: the *new heredity*, in Christ Jesus, the *new environment* formed by the Holy Spirit which envelops the new born soul as in an atmosphere in which the Christian lives and moves and has his new being, and the *new habit* of a life which daily dies to sin, and rises again to newness of being with Christ.

Now all these three things are grounded in the work of Christ's cross. The new heredity springs out of the soul's union with Christ, which is implied

[1] Heb. 9 : 28.

in belief in Him ; for Christ is the efficacious substitute of no one who has not Christ also formed within him.

The new environment or atmosphere in which the believer is expected to live and move is the result of that affusion of the Spirit of Pentecost, which came upon the church as a permanent enswathing influence —none the less an influence as represented in the Acts, because a personality also. This enswathing influence is the direct consequence and attestation of the reconciliation as accepted in Heaven. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church was the Father's seal on the work of Christ's atonement. And it was intended to be the continuous power in which all Christian life was to be lived and all Christian work was to be done.

The late Professor Josiah Cooke of Harvard in his Union Theological Seminary lectures entitled "The Credentials of Science the Warrant of Faith," tells us that every year in his class-room work he was accustomed to perform an experiment in electro-magnetism which he never repeated without an increasing sense of awe at the mysterious powers about and above him. The experiment was this : in front of the professor was placed an oak table on which lay a pile of horseshoe nails. In one corner of the room was a powerful dynamo. When the electric current was turned on and the poles of the battery were brought

up under the table, although they did not touch the nails themselves, there was immediately constituted in all the region about the table a "field of magnetic force"; and now so long as that field of force was maintained, the professor could take those loose horse-shoe nails and build them up into various forms, *e. g.*, a cube, a sphere or an arch. The nails would stay in exactly the form placed as if soldered together, so long as the current was on. The moment the current was turned off the nails would collapse into a shapeless mass.

Now in some such way we conceive that after Christ's crucifixion, resurrection and ascent, to the right hand of the Father, He became in Himself as glorified, the great personal dynamic of the universe capacitated to ensphere us. From Him since Pentecost there now proceeds to earth in a continuous way —unless we insulate ourselves against it—a flow of spiritual power, ever available to His disciples. There is constituted about us a new *field of spiritual force* in which, as believers, we may live our new life, and perform our divine work.

Thus the continued life of Christ through the Holy Spirit, while indeed personal, yet operates on us as a diffused presence, an enswathing influence, at all events a power, within which we may accomplish our divine tasks with a power not our own, being "strengthened with all power according to the might

of His glory."[1] Thus the new environment is the product of atoning grace; it springs out of the ratified cross.

Then the new habit of the believer's life also is due to the cross, because Christ's dying and living again objectively in our behalf is the ideal and archetype of our new life in Him. Like Paul, we are always to be "bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body."[2]

In Khartoum a fine statue has been erected of General Gordon seated on a dromedary with his face set towards the vast desert of the Soudan. It is said a traveller asked a guide whether the statue ought not to have faced the city. "Oh, no, sir," he replied; "they set him looking not towards the palace where he lived, nor towards the Nile where he might have escaped, but towards the Soudan *for which he died;* and he is waiting, sir, for morning to dawn over the Soudan." In this respect Gordon is like his Master as Stephen saw Him—with face turned towards the lost world for which He died, and alert to help."

If it be objected that there are mystical elements in these conceptions of the spiritual life, we grant it; but it is the mysticism of the New Testament; and of that we need not be afraid. While mysticism as a philosophy has sometimes proved misleading, yet it

[1] Col. 1: 11. [2] 2 Cor. 4: 10.

will remain true that the mystical element in Christianity—a matter which Ritschlianism avowedly discards—is the deepest, divinest thing in it. There is no Christian experience without it, and the reality of Christian experience can never find anything approaching adequate explanation of its processes until this mystical side of Christianity is recognized and its conceptions are employed in interpretation.[1] All deepest things in life and thought and being come to this in the end. What is the sense of motherhood but a mystical realization beyond words to tell? What are the deepest things in poetry but those things which are most alive, hidden beneath the words, throbbing and burning between the lines?

We need indeed have no mysticism that contradicts reason, the form of sound words in rational definition, or divine revelation; but in things Christian we must often go beyond reason if we describe our life in Christ at all. Experience is more than metaphysics; it is life. Christian experience is the supreme life and it must speak in terms loftier, in tones deeper, than anything else can employ. It rises above mere verbiage, grammatical constructions and literary forms, and breaks into parable, miracle, and apocalypse. It is this which contributes to the transcendent character of the writings of the Apostle John making them too

[1] See Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll's discussion of the subject in his late Glasgow Lectures, published in "A Garden of Nuts."

great for a naturalistic and mechanical criticism to appreciate.

In the early stages of experiments in colour photography, it was attempted to reproduce the colours of the spectrum. The experiment succeeded so far as the bars of colour in the interval between the violet and the red were concerned; but the camera failed to reproduce the ultra hues. The film was not sufficiently sensitive to seize the hidden mystery of colour, and a couple of blotches alone witnessed to the existence of the unseen rays. And thus it is also that "a coarsened soul in its dark misgivings, while it may bear witness to unseen things, yet lacks the subtlety to discern and realize the glorious realities of the transcending universe."

Christianity necessitates statements of "the eternal life in terms and under the conditions of time," which Harnack in one of his highest moods says "is Christianity." If the mystical expressions of the divine life are sometimes so merged in "the heavenlies" [1] that they appear lost, it is only that they may be found again in a "light unapproachable." [2]

Dr. Edmund H. Sears, a nominal Unitarian in Boston, who passed away some years ago, was so highly evangelical that he fairly revelled in the study of the writings of the Apostle John. As the result, he gave to the world a rare book entitled, "The

[1] Eph. 1: 3; 2: 6. [2] 1 Tim 6: 16.

Fourth Gospel the Heart of Christ." After his decease, a critical friend of his own denomination in presenting an estimate of him said: "Dr. Sears was not very broad, but he was *exceeding high.*" The author by his studies of the "disciple whom Jesus loved," [1] became so transfigured that he was lifted to those same heights whereon John was swallowed up in the glories of his Lord. The spiritual life in itself is always "exceeding high"; it springs from "the Lord from heaven," [2] even from Him who is "at the right hand of God" [3] enjoying the reward of His atoning cross, and from "henceforth expecting till His enemies be made the footstool of His feet." [4] And this is to say that the spiritual life *per se* is rooted in the objective achievement of Christ's cross as seen in the light of heaven: even in the radiance of the "great white throne." [5]

[1] John 21 : 7. [2] 1 Cor. 15 : 47. [3] Rom. 8 : 34.
[4] Heb. 10 : 13. [5] Rev. 20 : 11.

VIII

THE REDEMPTION OF THE BODY

But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you.—*Rom.* 8 : 11.

I NEXT come to the question of the relation of the reconciling work of Christ to the redemption of the body. That there is such a relation close and organic, embracing even the whole cosmos, is undoubtedly the teaching of Scriptures. As the natural death common to our mortal state springs out of sin, so the cure of death—"the last enemy that shall be destroyed"—is organically connected in revelation, with the redeeming work of Christ. Many passages of Scripture might be adduced in support of this statement. The following will suffice: in the eighth chapter of Romans, Paul says:—"But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you."[1] In the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, the apostle declares:—"But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first fruits

[1] Rom. 8 : 11.

of them that are asleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."[1] In his second letter to Timothy, Paul speaks of the purpose of grace in this wise: "But hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."[2] John in the Apocalypse says: "And I saw the dead the great and the small standing before the throne . . . and the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them . . . and death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire."[3]

The basal import of all this is that in the bodily resurrection of our Lord,—an organic part of the reconciling work of Christ,—we have the earnest of the bodily as well as spiritual redemption of all that are in Him. For it must not be forgotten that the work of Christ is a work of reconciliation in more than one sense. Of course, primarily, it is the reconciliation between the individual sinner and the holy God against whom he has offended; then it is also the potential harmonization of the schism which sin has wrought in man's nature, so that man comes into unison with himself; and to crown all, the cross is also the potential reconciliation of the entire cosmos,

[1] 1 Cor. 15 : 20–22. [2] 2 Tim. 1 : 10. [3] Rev. 20 : 12, 14.

including, of course, man's physical being, which has been disordered by sin. It is the plan of God to sum up all things in Christ, and through His cross. Says Paul in Colossians: "For it was the good pleasure of the Father, that in Him should all the fullness dwell, and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things upon the earth or things in the heavens." [1]

A true doctrine of man is in perfect keeping with these Scripture utterances. Dr. James Orr of Glasgow, in his great book, "God's Image in Man," has a passage which is substantially as follows: "The ripest philosophy concerning man, and especially as he is revealed in the Bible, is coming to see that body is as really a part of man's personality as is the soul. It is not a mere vesture serving as a temporary prison-house of the soul, but is a part of ourselves. The soul, indeed, may survive the body, but man was not created incorporeal spirit. The soul was designed to inhabit the body, and was never intended, in the whole of its life, to subsist apart from it. Hence, death also, in the true Biblical point of view, is not something natural to man, but must be regarded as something violent and unnatural, the rupture of that which was never meant to be disjoined.

[1] Col. 1:19.

Even while the soul, after physical death has ensued, survives the body, the soul is still regarded as, in a real sense, imperfect and weakened, in a condition temporarily awaiting its final rehabilitation. So, when we apprehend the real import of Christ's death in behalf of mankind, we behold that everywhere in the New Testament the very kernel of His reconciling death is found in His submission to death, and for the manifest reason that death was that in which was expressed the judgment of God upon the sin of our race. In the New Testament thought, death was a form of the penal evil to which Christ voluntarily submitted for the abolition of our curse. He "was made sin for us";[1] "He redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us";[2] "Inasmuch it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment, so Christ also having been once offered to bear the sins of many, etc."[3]

Says Dr. McLeod Campbell: "As our Lord alone truly tasted death, so to Him alone had death its perfect meaning as the wages of sin. For thus in Christ's honouring of the righteous law of God *the sentence of the law was included*, as well as the mind of God which that sentence expressed, . . . man being by the constitution of humanity capable of death; death having come as the wages of sin, it was not simply sin that had to be dealt with, but an ex-

[1] 2 Cor. 5 : 21. [2] Gal. 3 : 13. [3] Heb. 9 : 27.

isting law, with its penalty of death, and that death as already incurred."

The practical question which we have now to consider is this:—when may this secondary result of the reconciliation, the redemption of the body, be expected to occur? It is widely urged that the bodily new creation, which is confessedly germinal in the new birth, may be fully claimed and realized at any time by an act of faith; and that nothing but the lack of faith stands in the way of such a realization. The claimants of such a result are found among a great variety of people, from those who in the crudest fashion hold so-called "faith-cure" ideas to great numbers of highly cultured and gifted people identified with the modern Christian Science movement.

I cannot here go into any minute analysis of these views; nor is it necessary, so far as my present purpose is concerned. The point I would now make is this: that the advocates of the beliefs referred to, while correctly holding the principle that the mediating work of Christ, in its far-reaching result, includes the body as well as the soul, have strangely overlooked the limitation as to "the times and seasons," so accentuated in revelation. Capt. R. Kelso Carter, who, a generation ago, wrote a very positive book on "Divine Healing," twenty-five years after came out with a pamphlet entitled "Divine Healing Reviewed After Twenty-five Years," in which he ac-

knowledged this cardinal error at the earlier period of his thinking, namely, that he overlooked this factor of "times and seasons" in the divine program.

It is too common for orthodox teachers flatly to antagonize all aspects of belief in divine healing. Doubtless, there is much that may justly be opposed. For my own part, however, I think there is a wiser way of dealing with the matter than by severe antagonism. We lose nothing, and gain much, by cordially conceding that in principle the work of Christ covers all results that may be embraced under the health, the normal perfection, and even the glorification of the human body, as an object of redemption. We should, however, insist that this result is embraced in the work of Christ *only potentially*, and we should not expect its real destined manifestation until some future era or dispensation. It is perfectly clear, from Paul's argument in the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, that, for the present, "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain." For some reason not explained to us, "the creation has been subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of Him who subjected it, *in hope* that the creation itself also *shall be delivered* from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." [1] Moreover, the apostle declares that it is not only true that the whole creation groan-

[1] Rom. 8 : 20, 21.

eth, but that "ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves"—typical, representative Christians—"groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."[1] The apostle further says: "If we hope for that which we see not, then do we with *patience wait* for it."[2] Then, again, in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, wherein the apostle is speaking of the peculiar exaltation of Christ, he says:—"Thou didst put all things in subjection under His feet." "He left nothing that is not subject to Him." When, however, we inquire whether or not this reference is to an immediate or a potential result, we find answer in the following words: "But *now* we see *not yet* all things subjected to Him";[3] that is, they are *not actually, but potentially*, subjected; and then, lest the reader should be depressed by the demand made upon him for patient waiting until the assured result shall have been fully wrought out, the apostle adds:—"We behold Him"—the glorious archetype of all that we ourselves are to become—"who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour."[4] Thus it is emphatically said that the present hope of the Church for its bodily perfection and glorification is to be

[1] Rom. 8:23.
[2] Rom. 8:25.
[3] Heb. 2:8.
[4] Heb. 2:9.

found in the fact that its living *Head and Lord Himself is already glorified* at the right hand of the Father; and that, because of our corporate union with Him, *we also in the end shall be glorified with Him.* This organic unity with Christ is further emphasized by the statement,—"For both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of *one*, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren."[1] Our brotherhood to Christ, then, is, in part, a brotherhood of hope, of expectation, of anticipation, and not of actual historical realization, until the hour shall strike "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality," and "death shall be swallowed up in victory."[2] Those who claim that health may immediately take the place of confirmed disease, virtually assert the possibility of the immediate assumption of the immortal body, which would be tantamount to translation. This, however, has come to pass in no modern experience since our Lord's ascension; nor is it likely to occur until He comes in glory; and is wholly contrary to anything the Scriptures warrant us to expect until that hour shall strike.

Now while strongly protesting against the sweeping claims made by faith-cure advocates, we grant that God in His compassion may and does in some instances answer prayer in extraordinary healing.

[1] Heb. 2:11. [2] 1 Cor. 15:54.

By His Spirit He so enriches the soul as results in a quickened vitality, and the whole body is correspondingly invigorated. These results while supernatural rather than "miraculous," strictly speaking, are nevertheless to be received as tokens of God's superhuman grace to the suffering, and may well cheer all Christian hearts. But further, even in cases where prayer is not specifically answered, and health restored, the fact that Christ Himself, in whom all believers have their deepest life, has His immortal body in glory, ought to conduce to the highest hopefulness and the most joyous confidence in God. Alas, when disease comes in and the bodily functions become abnormal, it is the tendency for human nature to sink down into depression. Doubtless the enemy of all human well-being, would have us despair and abandon hope altogether, even of ultimate immortality. The habit thus to coddle our sickness, to allow it to become chronic, till mind and heart, and ultimately faith itself, as well as our fleshly tissues, become sickly and morbid, is certainly to be resisted. The realities included in the work of Christ in the reconciliation of all elements of schism in the world, embracing this, are too great and precious to be readily relinquished.

But the more extended form of error now widely current claiming a close connection between the health of the body and the Christian religion and an error

of a much more serious sort, is the cult of Christian Science. This error, while like extreme views of divine healing, practically claiming immediate immunity from the ills of the flesh, nevertheless stands on a very different basis in principle. The advocates of divine healing, however extreme they are in what they believe may be claimed by faith for the body, are nevertheless believers in the objective revelation of the Bible. Whatever philosophy they have for their view, they deduce, however narrowly, from the Scriptures. Christian Science, on the other hand, starts from a different quarter. It first determines its philosophy and then endeavours to square its Bible to its philosophical presuppositions. In the previous chapter we have shown that Ritschlianism is primarily a philosophy,—an agnostic philosophy based on the idealism of Kant and others,—an error really as old as Grecian pagan philosophy. In this respect, Christian Science is but another phase of the same thing. This also is based on the idealistic philosophy: it throws overboard the objective realism of the universe: sin, Satan, disease, even the body itself, have no reality. They are all mere mental forms. To be sure, Christian Science, like Ritschlianism, plays fast and loose with its terms. So far as God is concerned, nothing in Him is eternal or necessary. The very intuitions of the mind are so constituted as to see things, not as they are, but as they are not.

Thus by creation, a lie has been wrought into the very constitution of human nature; and the way to get rid of sin and its *sequelæ* in the form of bodily diseases of all sorts, is simply to deny that they exist, except as phantasms in the mind. Thus are they to be cured instead of by right relation to the curative power of Christ's cross, partly here in time but completely only through the cosmic processes of Christ's second coming, our own bodily resurrection and final glorification with Him.

This system, like every other, which has made up its mind arbitrarily to see only the subjective side of this universe, does so not on grounds of sound reason, certainly not on Biblical grounds,—but on the ground of pure will: it simply wills to believe certain things, because it will. This is essential unreason, a denial of man's true nature as well as God's; this is why it is so hard also to recover oneself from such a committal—because the state of mind often is *willfully* chosen. In other words, Christian Science is an effort to escape the ills that afflict the flesh of the natural man, by an unreasoning denial of matter and the actualities connected with the body. It is doubtless often associated with some sort of faith in Jesus Christ, although such conceptions of faith are vague and inconsistent.

Christianity on the other hand discloses the antithesis which exists between the natural man,

descended from the first Adam, with his sin, disease and death, and the new spiritual man derived from "the last Adam," with His mediation, moral health and resurrection power. The aim of Christianity is to secure by repentance and faith, the new centering of the soul in the crucified and risen Christ, in whom it finds first spiritual regeneration, and ultimately bodily and corporeal well-being. The regenerate soul thus centred in the new-Adamic life, is organically, corporately, one with Christ. But death in the Scriptures is always conceived as the result of sin, and its cure is in the reconciling work of Christ; and for it there is no other cure. Hence the bearing of the cross of Christ upon the redemption of the body is organically involved in any true philosophy of Christ's work. There is a Christian interpretation of death, and there is also a Christian interpretation of its cure, and it is something vastly truer and more comprehensive than anything outside of the Apostolic interpretations afforded by the New Testament. The process of corporeal redemption in the main, however, waits to be wrought out in the "times and seasons which the Father hath set within His own authority." [1]

When Christian Science declares, that disease as such has *no reality*, much depends upon what is meant by the term "reality." In all the foregoing

[1] Acts 1 : 7.

discussion the reader will have observed the distinction I have everywhere implied, and often formally made, that the redemption of Christ is grounded in the deepest *realities* of the universe of which we are a part. The use of this term "reality" in its deepest sense needs to be restored to Christian thought and to the Christian vocabulary. Alas! much of the religious thought of our day is confined to the mere realm of speculative, dogmatic opinion, or so-called "beliefs." Now, deeper than all intellectual concepts about the truth which men entertain, is the substratum or realm of reality itself, out of which all correct opinions should spring.

It is now recognized by the great teachers that if truth is to be really apprehended, it is not enough to bring the intellect merely to bear upon it. The whole composite man must come into right relation to it. Not only must the understanding discern, but the heart must feel, the conscience must sanction, and chief of all, the will must surrender to a proper authority, if reality is to be reached. Even Herbert Spencer in his latest book entitled "Facts and Comments," in a chapter on "Feeling Versus Intellect," says that "it is an error to suppose that the brain is chiefly if not wholly the organ of the intellect; the chief component of mind is feeling; sensations and emotions are parts of consciousness, and so far from being its minor components, they are its

major components; so that the body even of our thought-consciousness consists of feeling sensations and only the form constitutes what we distinguish as intelligence. The emotions are the essential part of the mind. The emotions are the masters, the intellect is the servant." Philosophy itself at length feels compelled to give such a place as this to the feelings in relation to intelligence, then *a fortiori* how much profounder intelligence would become, if it were to embrace in its exercise also the action of the conscience and the will, of moral beings? No man ever touches reality by exercising the speculative understanding merely. Such an one stands outside the truth; he merely patronizes it; he cannot grasp it until he has personally surrendered to its authority, and is held captive by it. When one is thus possessed by the truth, he moves inside it, as Christ always did; and he knows the reality in the sense implied throughout the First Epistle of the Gospel of St. John, wherein more than thirty times the apostle declares "we know," reiterating the deep sense in which the "experienced believer" has an assurance akin to God's own of the verities of the spiritual universe. The words with which John concludes the epistle truly rendered read thus, "And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us insight—a through-knowledge—that we may understand Him that is *real*, and we are in Him that is

real even in His Son Jesus Christ; this is the *real* God and eternal life."[1] To know thus, is to stand in an entirely different realm from that occupied by mere dogmatic opinion. Even in the study of a science like chemistry or biology, the supreme values to the student are found in the use of the laboratory, because the knowledge acquired thereby, becomes through the experimentation a part of one's personal history. This is even more profoundly true in the knowledge of God and of His Son.

Christ in His relation to truth could ever say, "I *am* the truth." The contents of His self-consciousness were thus the deepest realities in the universe. It has long been to me a cause of wonder that the great psychologists, while giving so much emphasis to the physiological and other bases of that science, have never yet begun to deal at all in any serious way with the psychological contents of the mind of Jesus. A true study of the mind of Christ would probably shed more light upon psychology, ideally speaking, than any other investigation possible, for the reason that the contents of the mind of Christ were ultimate reality, as God sees it.

If then by "unreality" Christian Science means, as some of its more thoughtful advocates appear to hold, that sin and disease do not correspond to the real ideals for human life which God cherishes, which

[1] 1 John 5 : 20.

Christ embodied, and towards which He aimed in all His redemptive relations to mankind, we would not differ with that contention. This cult under review, however, in the use of the language characteristic of its teachers, often uses the terms "real" and "reality" in such a way, as implies that the philosophy underlying the terms is at best idealism, if not Pantheism, in which case its teachings nullify all Christian reality.

I have said in a previous chapter that redemption is deeper than natural causation; that the grace of Christ runs underneath all relations of cause and effect; and is entirely adequate to modify those relations, to countervail them, or turn the tables on them altogether, should occasion warrant. In so saying, however, we do not imply that the law of cause and effect in the universe, as it exists, is not an actuality. It is not the deepest reality, because there is something below it, contemplated by God in His profounder purposes for the race in Christ.

I have often thought if more of our Christian teachers would but think out and live into the realities of divine redemption as become them, and would express them in such terms as characterize, for example, the writings of the Apostle John, there would be less occasion for breaking entirely with the many thinking, spirituelle people, who have been carried away temporarily as I believe, on the wave of this movement of Christian Science. It is probable that

in this manner the drift might be the sooner stayed. In our belief, one reason why that movement has gained adherents with such rapidity, is that many have found themselves unsatisfied by the common ministrations of the orthodox pulpit. Accordingly when opposed from that quarter especially, they readily resent criticism. Much that they have heard, they consider mere second-hand stereotyped opinion, not to say platitude,—gathered from superficial understanding on the part of ministers they have known of the divine word itself, and unaccompanied by any depth of spiritual experience and so these people easily draw away from such teachers and are hard to reclaim. Many of the class referred to have been first turned towards the new cult by occasion of some sickness, for comfort which the ordinary ministrations of the church have failed to bring. Having found in the traditional sources "no balm in Gilead" and "no physician there," [1] where they had the best right to find them, by a sad reaction, they have "sought unto them that have familiar spirits" [2] and have fallen an easy prey, sometimes even to the charlatan.

Doubtless, some of the results of healing claimed, and especially in the realm of nervous disorders, may be explained by the well-known influence of a stronger mind over a weaker one, becoming a sort of mentor to it. The mind of the diseased one has also been

[1] Jer. 8 : 22. [2] Isa. 8:19.

directed to realities deeper than those of the body ; it has been freed from morbid and chronic fear always conducive to disease. In this emancipation, the mind has first found a more normal mental attitude, and then consequent upon it, a rebalanced and improved physical condition. It is useless to dispute such results, for they occur in connection with all sorts of psychological conditions and beliefs. But whatever elements of truth there may be in connection with any theories of mental healing our insistence is that for many psychic and physical results like those referred to above, no one needs to turn from Christ, or the Bible, or the Christian Church to find these values at their best. Jesus Christ and His redeeming work, with all they involve of blessings spiritual and corporeal, hold more than any of these other and fantastic systems can claim, without their extravaganza. All that is needed for better, more normal and wholesome results than any of these one-sided systems can show, is simple evangelical, experimental Christianity, with its common-sense applications to the whole realm of human life, embracing also as true Christianity ever should, the use of such means as are approved by science and experience. Such a Christianity in the proportion that it is put to the test, will vindicate itself, while the mere fads of the hour, under whatever names they may be known, will logically and naturally disappear.

IX

THE MISSIONARY ENERGY OF THE CROSS

And I if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto Myself.—*John* 12 : 32.

I NOW come to the application of this discussion in hand to the matter of Christian missions, or to the universal extension of Christianity. The sense of responsibility for world-evangelization is very largely determined by the measure in which the death of Christ is realized as an actual achievement—a judgment-death—for all mankind. The missionary impulse and energy are grounded in the reconciling work of Christ's Cross.

In chapter V of this discussion, we have seen what is meant by a judgment-death. There we found that by the death of Christ, at least four great judicial results, distinctively characterizing Christ's mission in the moral universe, were embraced: (1) The acknowledgment in Christ's person and act of the due judgment which the sin-principle required. (2) The casting out of the self or world principle, of which Satan is the personal author and representative. (3) The destruction of the organic connection which Satan had brought about between sin and

death ; and (4), the adjudgment of all men to the Redeemer as His potential possession. Thus, by this fourfold achievement, the judicial expression of Christ's work on the cross extended organically to the deepest realities of the moral universe. In effect, it anticipated every essential moral issue which the soul need fear in view of its own misgivings concerning destiny. The penal difficulty with respect to past sin was potentially met. Satan, man's arch enemy, was potentially destroyed, the causation between sin and death was potentially broken, and the claim of Christ to the possession of all men was potentially set up. One therefore who has believed that Christ has accomplished this fourfold result, looking forward to the final judgment may confidently sing :

> "Bold shall I stand in that great day,
> For who aught to my charge shall lay?
> Fully absolved from these I am,
> From sin and fear, from guilt and shame."

Thus Christ's cross in dealing with the ultimate spiritual realities of the universe was in effect the anticipation of the final judgment for all mankind.

The early triumphs of Christianity were won upon the basis of the conception of Christ's death as such a judicial transaction. The real victories of missions of to-day are being achieved upon the same basis, whether we refer to the work of those who initiate and support missions, or to those who actively per-

form the work on the fields. And if missions are to be extended in power, they must be continued through energies no less pronounced.

I do not question that some forms of mission work may be undertaken and for the time continued on the part of such as hold to a different view of the work of Christ. The spirit of mere philanthropy—albeit that is the fruit of the grace of Christ—will do something in a missionary way. Human compassion often exists where there is no theory or doctrine underlying it. Sentiment of a noble sort is a real power up to a certain limit. The inspirational power of martyrdom is a precious influence for good, and on the supposition that Christ in His death was the prince of martyrs, some for a time will "follow in His train." On any theory of Christ's person, however, which ranks Him as only the highest evolution of man, missions can have little power of strong initiative or resolute continuance. Nor on any view of Christ's work regarded merely as an ethical ideal or example of goodness, will missions long pursue an earnest way. Christ, as Dr. Forsyth says, was "greater in His cures"—His moral and spiritual cures of the disease of sin—"than He was in His teachings," supreme as those teachings are. He *achieved victories* which carry in themselves conquering potencies for all men; and these potencies must be felt and realized by the missionary himself as pure grace, before spirits like

Judson in Burma, or Livingstone in Africa, or Paton in the New Hebrides, will risk all to communicate them to others. Let the church get away from the cross as an *achievement wrought in the moral universe*, embracing all its issues, its last realities, and it will not long keep alive the flame kindled by the fathers; much less will it light new fire for their sons. The cross considered in its vicarious power alone can create in disciples moral earnestness and courage requisite for the dethronement of heathenism and the purgation of its corruptions. For let it ever be remembered the battle to be won is not between mere competetitive systems of religion. The conflict is between rival kingdoms, of which there are but two, —that of Christ the Lord of Glory and that of Satan, Christ's ancient antagonist. The contest is between Christ and him, and not between us and our rivals. Christ's energy alone is equal to that conquest. "For our wrestling—ours in Christ—is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."[1] The church will never gather courage for the vast acheivements yet to be won in the world's evangelization, except as it has a vivid sense of the fact that what in principle has already been accomplished by Christ's cross is the far greater part of the

[1] Eph. 6 : 12.

achievement. Our Lord's utterance in His triumphal word, "It is finished," looked both backward and forward. As to the past, it declared that the basis for human salvation had been completely laid; and, for the future it declared that this achievement was potent for all coming consummations. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." [1] It is the realization of the twofold achievement,—Christ's victory over evil and the motive engendered by it through the Divine Spirit,—that can give power, momentum, and endurance for the world-wide accomplishment. To this the church at this hour needs to be brought back. Not otherwise can it gain its pristine power.

The real "charter of missions" is found not in the mere fact that Christ commanded that the world should be evangelized, emphatic as that command is. You may thunder the great commission in men's ears for a lifetime, but there is no potency in the mere iteration of a command, nor in the will power of half-awakened Christians to get the mandate executed. After a time a command long disobeyed becomes hated, and the more it is reiterated the harder men's consciences become. A new appreciation of the work of Christ upon the tree alone can renew the energy of the soul that is "blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old

[1] Rev. 19 : 10.

sins" [1] by sacrificial blood. The charter of missionary effectiveness is preëminently in the character of the work of Him who hung upon the cross, and who on that cross wrought out in principle the anticipation of all that the last judgment itself can be. The imperative of missions is here. We hear it said that the old argument which based the urgency of missions upon the certain judgment, the doom, which it was believed awaited all the heathen at the last judgment, is no longer valid, if indeed it ever were; that the present generation will not respond as did the fathers to an appeal thus grounded. Granted that the temper of the times is irresponsive to a principle of judgment of any kind. This may be mere modern insolence,—a contempt of God's government *per se*—and men need to be on their guard, lest they be misled by so profane a sophistry. I have noticed that those in our time who are skeptical as to the matter of future doom for the heathen, who make little of any sort of judgment for any one, also conspicuously ignore that more central judgment which was set up in the cross of Christ. They look upon the cross as a mere episode in the history of a moral hero. Of course, such boldly deny that Christ's death was in any sense a judgment-death—that in any respect it had reference to the holy government of God, as a divinely judicial matter.

[1] 2 Peter 1 : 9.

It is thus easy for some very sincere men, in practically abolishing both forms of judgment, really to reduce God to a moral anarchist, and totally to abandon the evangelical position at its centre. In so doing such men nullify the evangel, the good news of any salvation worth the having; and they must in the end lose motive power.

There is a real and valid connection between the motive for missions and the judgment-principle; a connection that can never be dissolved or be out of date. Only the judgment with which the motive is connected is primarily that judgment which has *already occurred*, on the cross, as Christ declared it would occur, and as the great doctrinal epistles demonstrate really occurred. Says Dr. Forsyth: "The greatest judgment that God ever sent on a wicked world was no catastrophe: it was Christ, and His cross and His salvation. What was done in the cross was a greater thing than the last judgment itself can be, however sublimely you conceive it; for the last judgment is something done in humanity: but the cross was something done in the soul of Christ. And great as humanity is, the soul of Christ is greater still." We need to understand this, and how rightly also to use this event, if we are strongly to move the Church to saving effort in any age. Here is the motor of real missionary energy for the Church.

The reason why non-evangelicals have few or no

missions to the heathen is because they have not grasped the real nature of Christ's death as a judgment-death, with its vast and gracious import; they do not believe that in the work of Christ's cross, there was involved the potential spiritual redemption of men; they have no redemption; and of course they do not believe that such untold consequences depend on whether or not the heathen knows and avails himself of the nature and value of Christ's death, and the grace flowing from it. They have therefore no adequate motive for rising to so divine and merciful a service. Indeed, they do not regard men as either lost or savable in the sense that evangelicals do.

And, on the other hand, the reason why evangelical Christians have missions to the heathen, strong and many, is because they more truly perceive the force and value of Christ's death as a gracious judgment-death. Like the Apostle Paul, they know that that event has potentially altered the moral status and the divine possibilities, for themselves and for all mankind. It is the understood relation, of this first judgment of grace as well as of holiness, which occurred in the historic cross, to the last judgment of mankind, that with the blessing of the Divine Spirit, creates the evangelical motive.

But the energy of the cross as a motive to incite the Church to efforts for the heathen needs to be brought to bear upon the heathen themselves also if

they are to be lifted out of their moral weakness, sin and guilt. In the light of all human history there is no force which can be employed so effective as this. The heathen without revelation have no knowledge of this form of the judgment just referred to, namely, that which has taken place in the cross. The only substitute they have for this, as in any sense enabling them to anticipate the last judgment and to prepare for it is that suggested by an untutored conscience.

The Apostle Paul declares that "as many as have sinned without the law—*i. e.*, without revelation—shall also perish without revelation; and as many as have sinned under revelation shall be judged by revelation . . . *in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ.*" [1] Plainly, Paul here teaches that the heathen are finally to be judged in the light of a standard identical in principle, however varied in the form of its expression, with that which will be applied to those who have had revelation. Both classes will be judged with reference to their interior reciprocal moral attitude—"the secrets of men"—towards the principles embraced in the redeeming cross—such an attitude as would accept or reject Christ were He disclosed to them. "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ," [2] that is,

[1] Rom. 2 : 12–16. [2] 2 Cor. 5 : 10.

before His cross, to be judged by the principles which constitute it what it is.

To prepare them for the last judgment, the heathen have the benefit only of the natural judgment in their own consciences; they are wholly destitute of the enlightening and transforming power of the form of judgment expressed in Christ's cross. For lack of this they have no positive assurance of any real salvation at all, and they are destitute of the dynamic which the gospel as exhibited in the historic reconciliation affords.

But how inadequate an agency is the natural conscience, as compared with that gospel which we know and might give to them. Imperfect as the poor natural standard of the heathen is, God does not despise it; He will have regard to it in its proper measure. Paul distinctly says He will. "Their conscience meanwhile *accusing* or *else excusing* them."[1] But the benefits to be derived from that standard do not go far enough to meet real heathen need, nor do they satisfy any worthy ideal in the Christian. Such a measure of Christian responsibility as leaves the heathen with his untutored corrupt conscience merely, has little regard for Christ's honour on the one hand, or for man's actual and matured well-being on the other. A worthy Christian ideal mightily moves one to make good the crown-

[1] Rom. 2: 15.

rights of Christ acquired by His cross. It becomes zealous that Christ shall "see His seed," . . . "prolong His days" . . . and "see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." [1]

A really Christian motive, if it exists, will also urge one forth with a mighty impulse to make known to the potential heirs of Christ's grace, a gospel so adapted to move and renew their hearts.

Among the company of devoted missionaries of the American Baptist Missionary Union in Assam a generation ago, was Rev. Edward Payson Scott. About the year 1865 when I was a college student, I heard this young apostle relate a most thrilling narrative, the facts of which were as follows: Mr. Scott at one time felt particularly moved to visit one of the wild Hill Tribes known as Nagas, living on the mountains, three days' journey from the station. The missionary had made a beginning in the language, and with his Naga teacher, prepared for the visit. His purpose becoming known to the British officer resident at the station, that officer strongly discouraged the venture contemplated; but Mr. Scott, feeling that the call was of God, would not be deterred.

Then said the officer, "I will send an escort of soldiers for your protection." "No," said Scott, "that would defeat my purpose. I must go as a man of peace. My gospel is one of love and good will.

[1] Isa. 53: 10, 11.

If I went with soldiers, my errand would be misunderstood. I must go attended only by a native companion." And so they set out on the journey. Towards the close of the third day they reached the base of a high ridge on the summit of which was a native village. As they ascended the elevation, suddenly the villagers who had taken alarm, emerged from their huts, drew themselves together in a sort of line of battle, and began in unison to wave their great spears as if ready to thrust. Shortly the chief cried out, "Halt, we know who you are. You are the Maharanni's (the Queen of England's) man. You come to make us prisoners and to carry away our children. Come no further." Scott hesitated a moment, questioning what to do, and then drew out his violin which he was wont to carry with him, and began to play and sing in their own dialect, the old redemption hymn,

"Alas! and did my Saviour bleed,
And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

When he had finished the stanza, the astonished villagers following the lead of their chief, thrust their spears into the ground and broke ranks. The missionary sang on:

"Was it for crimes that I had done,
He groaned upon the tree?

Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!

"Well might the sun the darkness hide,
And shut his glories in,
When God the mighty maker died
For man, the creature's sin."

As the song rang out the wild men began to creep down the hillside and gather round in a crouching attitude, and at length the chief exclaimed: "Where did you learn that, sir? Sing us some more. We never heard anything like that, sir." The savages were completely subdued by these strains of pathetic gospel announcement. The missionary was completely safe, invited up to the village, and treated to its best hospitality, and before he left for his station, the gospel message, so far as it could then be apprehended, was felt and acknowledged.

During my own visit to Gauhati, Assam, on a missionary tour in 1890, among the interesting natives who came to our gathering with requests of one kind or another for help from the missionary society which I represented, was a native from this same wild people, from the very neighbourhood where Scott had first sung and preached his gospel, bringing a formally written document, begging for missionary teachers to carry on the work begun upon that spot by the lamented Scott twenty-five years previously. The message had thus been treasured through that long period.

In the light of the differing standards of judgment referred to in preceding paragraphs, with their differing possibilities of well-being for human life—namely, the clear standard set up in Christ's cross, and the poor blurred standard written in the natural conscience,—how important then it is that the heathen shall have the rich benefits of the former, and not be left to the poverty of the latter. This is the strongest leverage whereby the heathen himself can be lifted to higher moral levels. This is the supreme power of God for him; without it he is in some terrible sense lost to his higher possibilities; to say the least, he is an *unspeakable loser*, and so deeply lost.

From what has been said respecting the relation of that first judgment which occurred in Christ's cross to the last judgment of mankind, and how deeply destitute the heathen are without its benefits, the enterprise of evangelizing the heathen world is also seen to stand upon an entirely different plane from other Christian work. Work among those in Christian lands who have long known of the redemption of Christ, but who have not yielded to it, would be more correctly described as the endeavour to *evangelicalize* or render *evangelical;* for such were long since evangelized in a sense that the heathen never have been. And their accountability is of a very different sort. Our responsibility for such persons in Christendom is also relatively much lessened, in view of the light

they have had and either already accepted or rejected, whereas, as concerns the heathen who have never had even an elemental knowledge of the gospel, it is our supreme duty to give them this initial boon.

Real as is the duty in its place, to *edify* the Church and to extend it in all lands where it exists, yet the primary obligation is to *create* the Church, give existence to it where now its existence is impossible. It is often said that "missions are missions: they are all one," but these terms are used in a confusing sense. "Missions" are not "missions" when the term "missions" is used in two senses, any more than a nursery is a college. Both these are educational institutions, but their functions are widely different. So missions, in the sense of efforts to *introduce* Christianity where before it was impossible,—foreign missions,—are a work standing upon a plane by themselves: they are largely *sui generis*, and they are so because of an ignorance in their subjects of the cross, not yet met. Christian efforts which seek to edify churches already existing in communities which have long had the gospel are something different in kind. Of course, this is also obligatory work. It is, however, only just to the divine realities involved in the case that we use terms with accuracy; and that we discountenance the growing habit of obliterating distinctions which, in the very nature of things, exist between so different forms of Christian

work. For these are distinctions which the Scriptures make and emphatically teach.

Missions of whatever kind, in so far as they are true, the product of the Spirit of God, are, of course, *one in spirit;* but foreign missions and home missions ought not to be represented as *one in kind*, or as serving the same functions. To ignore these fundamental distinctions is to level down the primary forms of work to the grade of the secondary. On the secondary grounds the primary forms cannot flourish. The primary work is thus often destroyed altogether. To denominate every form of prudential, humane, philanthropic, patriotic work—every kind of propaganda—as "missions," is to play fast and loose with terms. To syndicate "missions" according to the indiscriminate use of the term so common, is practically to remove the work of evangelization of the heathen from the distinctive basis on which the New Testament places it, and to lower it to a different plane altogether. Of course, then, corresponding harm is done to the cause of heathen evangelization, and to Christ Himself. God's sensitive point is the regard in which Christ's judgment-death for all mankind is held and pressed home on them. This should be the supreme regulative activity of the Church. Every intelligent Christian should make it his first endeavour to keep efforts for the evangelization of the heathen to the fore, because of what the Cross of

Christ is to mankind and to Christ. And if this were done, every home interest of the Kingdom of God would be but enhanced. Evangelization first, edification afterwards.

But all this has a bearing upon the defense of missions and the grounds on which we may effectively argue their extension; it points to a better apologetic for missions than we have yet had.

For lack of a careful and really Biblical apologetic for missions, the thought of the Church has been characterized by two extreme views, which, in order to clarify our thought, need here to be stated. One view implies a false severity on the part of God, and the other a false laxness in the divine government over men. One class has believed and taught that all the heathen who are without historical knowledge of Christ are irretrievably doomed, root and branch. This view, moreover, has often been so presented as grossly to caricature and dishonour God. The view conceives of the heathen, apart from their modified responsibility (while ignorant of Christ), as given over to destruction in a most radical meaning of that term. The view utterly overlooks the Biblical fact that, by virtue of the eternally-purposed reconciling work of God in Christ, the whole human race,—and, of course, the heathen portion of it,—is placed *under an evangelical probation*, although many are yet ignorant of it; that the heathen, therefore,

are not under a system of severe legalism, but under a *grace-system;* they are *potentially* saved, so far as Christ's atoning work goes, already. Even though they go to the judgment without a knowledge of this work of Christ, they will, to their own surprise, be judged in the light of what Christ's cross means to the universe of God, as Paul says, "according to my Gospel by Jesus Christ." [1] If so, the judgment of the heathen will be a much more merciful one than many suppose; doubtless, those of them who at some point in their lives, for one cause or another, perhaps through sorrowful providences,—perhaps through natural conscience,—or flashes of truth in nature, have been brought to such a spirit of incipient faith that, had they known Christ, they *would* have accepted Him, will, in some sense, be saved. They certainly will not be "beaten with the many stripes" [2] —they cannot be, under a system of grace—of those who knew the Redeemer and willfully rejected Him.

In this view, God is represented as having done all He could do, apart from the coöperation of those who know Him, and without encroaching upon the freedom of those who know Him not, to save all men. The responsibility, then, still remains upon the heathen to act in the best light they have, while the Church, on its part, is called upon mercifully to communicate its better light to the heathen, even as

[1] Rom. 2 : 16. [2] Luke 12 : 47.

God, on His part, has shown it to His Church. Since this is so, the Church need not plead with God to show mercy to the heathen. Rather should it plead with itself, having received mercy to extend that mercy to others. There is no basis left for censure of God on the view thus stated, the moment the real issues are understood.

The second class who are really the indifferents concerning missions, reasoning upon presuppositions suggested by human sympathy, have gone to the exactly opposite extreme from the first class just mentioned. They view the whole matter of efforts for the heathen as no concern of theirs, believing that God will care for it anyway, whether they coöperate or not.

This was Jonah's reasoning: "I knew that thou art full of compassion, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy," and *therefore* "I hasted to flee unto Tarshish"; even though "the clamant imperative of the eternal will was calling loudly elsewhere, and Nineveh was speeding down a steep path of degeneracy to moral and spiritual death."

Now what shall be said of such an attitude? Certainly, the God thus conceived is a characterless God, and the view of human responsibility which underlies it is characterless. This view does not recognize any real mercy or grace in God at all, and itself has none; it rather ignores both grace and judgment. It

attributes to God simple irresponsibility even to Himself; and of course on such a basis men would hold themselves correspondingly irresponsible, for there is nothing worth while to coöperate with in the discharge of responsibility. God is reduced to a negation, the destiny of the heathen to a negation, and one's own conduct is likely to become a negation. Missions on such conceptions are impossible.

All this is a matter which has been popularly most poorly understood, and very unsatisfactorily dealt with in missionary preaching. This it is that needs to be cleared up to the mind of the Church. On this clarification must rest that better plea for Christian missions for which the Church long has waited. It is doubtless for lack of any clear apologetic that many ministers confused on the subject, never even attempt to develop in their people a distinctive missionary conscience and to lead them to support foreign missions in any earnest way. Traditional reliance has long been placed if not upon the extreme errors above referred to, yet upon vague or superficial considerations; upon the appeal of some mere society for extrication from financial difficulty, upon denominational or society pride, or upon pathetic incidents of missionary peril; and so not having thought out the real status of the heathen before God, many ministers even, give foreign missions largely the go-by. The better apologetic then must avoid both

conception of graceless austerity in God on the one hand, and of moral laxness on the other. If indifference to missions has ensued under the latter view, it must be admitted that great harm also has been done from long and wide prevalence of the former.

The better apologetic, like the deeper motive, for missions is found in the clearer understanding of the cross of Christ and its legitimate implications concerning the destiny of men. All men exist and live out their lives under the benign ægis of the reconciling work of Christ although they have not been informed of it, and have no benefit of the motive power lodged in it. By virtue of God's work in Christ—the Lamb eternally foreknown—the entire world of mankind has been adjudged to Christ as His possession. This, however, is practically but a potentiality as yet, and waits to be made operative by the Church in the case of the heathen, in order that the passion of Christ's heart may be fulfilled, and that men may be developed under it. But how differently this represents God as contrasted with such distorted conceptions as we have indicated. When the true situation as affected by the Cross of Christ is apprehended, at once it places the Church in a vastly improved, greatly stimulated, relation to the heathen; it seems worth while to make effort for them. We then coöperate with a divine purpose to realize eternal

positive values concerning which God Himself has taken the initiative.

In my conviction, it is in the proportion that one sees himself redeemed unto God through the anguish of Christ's cross, and then realizes that the saving values in that cross are available to every other human soul also, that one will rise to the sense of a proper human responsibility, and will coöperate in all the might of the Divine Spirit to save and bless the heathen. An intelligent Christian knows that in the divine intention the heathen have been adjudged to Christ: hence, he will try to actualize this potentiality or die in the attempt. This is the controlling thought of the missionary. On such a ground missions may be defended to every reasonable intelligence and conscience. But in order to this position, a proper understanding of the atonement of Christ in its relations to the heathen is presupposed.

The veteran missionary to China, Dr. William Ashmore, who surely has reflected long on this subject in a half century's residence among the heathen, and who is a model to all students of divine things in his reverence for God's word, has lately privately printed among other things, a discussion of "The Gospel of Nature" as a sample of his long-time method of teaching the heathen. In this discussion Dr. Ashmore points out that since the fall of man in the garden, God has been trying in all sorts of ways from

dispensation to dispensation—from the antediluvians down—to teach men the principle of faith in the true God. Under the preaching of Noah, for example, for a hundred and twenty years, God tried to show men by an object-lesson that if they would escape the judgment of the deluge they must go to building arks as Noah did; if they had, others than Noah would have been saved. "Noah didn't have a corner on all the gopher wood!" These promissory notes given to the faith-principle which, God through the ages has been begging men to accept and treasure up, in the end would all be 'convertible" into the coin value of the coming Redeemer's grace. "There was an ante-sunrise faith as well as a post-sunrise faith." It is this ante-sunrise faith" to continue Dr. Ashmore's figure, that some heathen could have savingly exercised if they would. Men however have ever been "slow of *heart* to believe"; but God's grace in Christ as a reality has not been vitiated thereby. Says Dr. Watkinson: "The Cross of Christ is the embodied oath of the Almighty (against God's pleasure in the death of the wicked) and it ought to banish unbelief and fear from every guilty heart." It is such a presentation of the negotiable values of the work of Christ's Cross, and its mighty appeal to the church for coöperation in getting men to believe, that must be made the basis of the true apologetic for Christian missions.

Then, if we consider the condition of the heathen,

how profoundly they need to be shown, late as it is for them, that inasmuch as through that timeless event represented in "the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world," they *came into being under auspices of grace* their moral destiny may now be determined, not on the basis suggested by their natural fears or superstitions; but on the ground of what Christ's cross is, as the revelation of the true God and what it has effected for them.

They need however to be brought into right moral attitude towards that cross. They need to be taught a new attitude, of faith, towards God as thus revealed; they need to be shown that the cross is the anticipation not only of judgment but of a saving judgment for them.

Says Dr. Forsyth, "The judgment at the end of history is only the corollary of the judgment at the *centre* of history. It is the sequel of the cross, where the soul of evil was judged and cast out (and grace was brought in) by the soul of Christ. It is not the judgment that *will fall*, but the judgment that has *fallen* in the cross, that is the chief matter." Thus the cross is the disclosure of God, both in His righteousness and His anticipated mercy for men. This disclosure with its native intended grace is the supreme need of the heathen; to understand the meaning of the cross is to understand God; and to welcome it is real, full and assured salvation.

The cross as thus explained will move the Church towards the lost and will move the lost Godward. By preaching the true cross, we show the Church how it may help to prepare the heathen through the first judgment in Christ for the final judgment impending; and in no less gracious a manner can we deal fairly with the heathen who need to know the secret and the basis of their true destiny. In no other way can they be enabled to overcome the awful dread of retribution in which many of the heathen now live, despite all that their imperfect or false systems have taught them. The accounts given by missionaries of the haunting fears and reproaches of conscience under which multitudes drag out their weary lives, is most distressing. Among the animistic tribes of Asia and Africa, and among all fetish worshippers, as well as among the devotees of the ethnic religions, there is no real peace of mind. Men live for the most part where they think at all, conscious of sin, self-condemned, anticipating horrible retributions, enduring torments manifold. Even though it may be believed that through the exceeding grace of God in Christ, some of the heathen for lack of light may be relatively excused in the great day, is it fair, is it even human for us so to neglect the heathen? At the best, any conception of salvation which the heathen have must be negative, inchoate only—in character. They need something more substantial, positive and assured.

We are glad to know that there are at least exceptional heathen who seem to be in such a moral attitude, that as taught only by their natural consciences, when Christ is presented they promptly accept Him. Doubtless many others would, if they knew Him. We suppose it is such as these whose consciences may and will in part "excuse" them "in the day when God shall judge the *secrets* of men by Jesus Christ."

A foreign missionary at the present time who should find among a pagan people those morally stirred by the movings of their own conscience and the spirit of truth, would properly be regarded as at the beginning of a movement of the largest promise for evangelical results, if properly followed up. Such a movement is just now in progress among the Muhso people of Burma, among whom about 6,000 converts have openly accepted the gospel within three years.

Ramke, one of the early converts among the Garos in Assam, long before he ever heard of Christianity, appears to have been in a state of real preparedness for the gospel: he was dissatisfied with a negation, hungering for something positive on which to rest. While his fellow tribesmen generally were devil-worshippers, Ramke came to discriminate between evil spirits and the one great good Spirit quite unlike all the evil spirits feared by his people. Ramke grew more and more to worship, however blindly, that good Spirit. When, therefore, he fell in with a little

booklet—the life of a Christian girl—he knew it to be true. Later when he met some native Christians who taught him the gospel of God's love in Christ, he at once laid hold of the truth, and of course came into a new and strong assurance of his salvation in Christ. I lately heard a missionary sister who for years had laboured in China, relate the following: She was once describing the loving character of the Christian's God to a company of her Chinese sisters. As she went on in her holy enthusiasm picturing God's real character as full of mercy to the sinful and the suffering, one of the Chinese women turned to her neighbour and said, "Haven't I often told you that there *ought to be* a God like that?" What an incitement it should be to us that we are able to affirm that there is "a God like that," that there is none other, and never has been. The reason why He can be "a God like that," is because of what has been effected through the cross of Calvary. The heathen are entitled to know this, and have the benefit of its power.

Grant that cases like the above are exceptional, yet let us thank God that they exist.

It is common to hear it said, that if any of the heathen "*live up to* the light" they have, such may be saved. But this answer implies that the heathen, as confessedly others are not, are shut up to hard and severe relations to law only, to a *legal judgment*, rather than to an evangelical judgment. This is an assump-

tion not borne out by Scripture. It is positively contrary to the teaching of Paul, in the Epistle to the Galatians, wherein he explicitly states, "that the Scripture shut up *all things under sin*, that the *promise by faith in Jesus Christ* (rather than the imposition on them of a severe legal judgment) *might be given to them that believe.*" [1] It is for believers that God has prepared salvation, however small be the measure of their light. Then besides who is there under the gospel that "lives up to" His light? When has God since the fall in Eden ever held any human being to so impossible a standard? The utmost any one does or can do, even with the knowledge of Christ, is to *act penitently* and *believingly* towards Christ,—act *in* the light he has, rather than *up to it.* This in principle is faith—the belief of the heart—the executive act of the soul, "the protoplasm," as Dr. Wm. Ashmore has called it, "of which faith is made," by whomsoever exercised. The question we are considering then properly takes this form: in case any heathen who in the light he has, is in such an attitude of heart (as some appear to be who readily welcome the gospel at the hands of missionaries) that if Christ should reveal Himself, would accept Him, may such an one be saved, at least in some measure, should he die without the sight? We think few intelligent Christian teachers nowadays would answer the

[1] Gal. 3: 22.

question thus stated in the negative. But even though such a low type of salvation (for it could not be more than this) may be theoretically possible for some, who that knows the value of Christ's cross, would be willing to leave the heathen as a whole without a *certain*, a *confident* and *full salvation*,—such a salvation as can only become available to them, by sharing in the Christian's acquaintance with the historical cross, and in the moral dynamic afforded by it? In this view, every previously existing reason why those who have the gospel should hasten with it to their heathen brethren is only enhanced. The motive instead of being weakened is strengthened to the degree that it is made worthier of God, of the church, and of every moral interest involved. Even Cornelius needed to "hear words" whereby he and his house "might be saved"—*assuredly*, *maturely* saved—in a far deeper sense than his prayers and his alms prior to his hearing Peter's message rendered him "accepted" of God. Along these lines the new yet old apologetic must move.

Of course on the assumption that God on His part may be gracious to him who walks in His light, we are not to draw too broad inferences. We have our responsibility respecting so great and serious a matter; and we must not be content with minimum possibilities for our heathen brethren. What father having in his family of children one who is feeble-

minded, while seeing all the others developing normally, would be content to leave the less favoured one in his partial imbecility, solacing himself with the reflection, "O well, the feeble-minded one is after all my child, and that will do." On the contrary, every true human instinct, and every obligation to God, would combine to incite the father to give special attention to the unfortunate one. Then *a fortiori*, since the relations involved as between the Christian and the heathen world, are of a spiritual and eternal sort, the moral action should be correspondingly more earnest, not less so.

Since the cross of Christ's judgment has been set up in the world, all souls under its ægis are *potential heirs* of the grace of Christ, if they did but know it, and could be brought to actualize it. Grant that the world in large part is still truant, a runaway world, as yet ignorant of its potential heirship to Christ, and in so far really without the transforming dynamic of the gospel, yet in purpose, it has been bought in by Christ. In God's regard, Christ is the inheritor of it all. By God's decree, according to the second Psalm, it has all been given to His Son.[1] It now remains for us to "decree" to coöperate with God for the realization of the divine decree. As the purchase of the travail of His soul, and by the crown-rights of the resurrection, it is Christ's—potentially His. The

[1] Psalm 2 : 8.

world waits to be made familiar with its real status under this divine benison, and to avail itself of it.

In confirmation of what I have just said, observe the utterance of the Apostle Paul, as found in his Epistle to the Ephesians, 3 : 3–8, thus rendered by Farrar Fenton in his version of the New Testament :— "By revelation the (eternal) secret was made known to me, . . . which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, . . . that the heathen are *heirs and participators and shareholders of the promise* in Christ Jesus through the gospel; of which I became a minister by the free gift of God, . . . to me the very least of all the holy, this gift was entrusted,—to be proclaiming to the heathen the good news of the immeasurable wealth of Christ, and to *throw light upon* what is the administration of the mystery which was hidden for ages with God, the Creator of all things." [1]

Then it is ours not to *bring into being* the mystery of the gospel grace and love, but to *make its secret known*, to "throw light" upon it, to illumine all men concerning its nature and reality, and to secure appropriation of its values. In doing this, we carry to the heathen the good news; we make possible to them the realization of the wealth of their own provided inheritance, but which can never be actually theirs,—certainly not theirs with any fullness,—unless

[1] See also R. V. American edition.

the Church coöperates with God to render intelligible and actual what is now only potential. It is at this point that the responsibility of the Church is so overwhelming,—the more overwhelming because God has gone so far in making the gracious provision.

Suppose that somewhere—no matter where—there is a poor family living in poverty and squalor and rags,—a widow with half-clad, half-starved children, and I have known for long years that the members of that family are the legitimate heirs of a vast estate, immediately available to them the moment they are told of it. Possibly they may continue to exist on the basis of ordinary providence, if I do nothing for them ; and yet I keep them in ignorance of their true inheritance. I don't trouble myself in any earnest manner to put them in the way of possessing their own. What would you think of me, on the lower grounds of common humanity, and especially on grounds of Christianity, for such neglect? But our relation to the heathen is poorly represented by such an analogy. What motive more do I want for getting to the heathen in some way with my message of gladness, relief and salvation, than the knowledge that Christ and His judgment-death and His saving grace are potentially theirs? Surely, it is obligatory on me and my brethren in the very highest sense to get them into their realization of a new and full heredity in Jesus Christ.

God in Christ has already done everything morally possible to afford a potential salvation for the heathen. To some extent, where missionaries have gone, this salvation has been actualized; but how shall God's yearning for the remaining myriads become effective, unless those who have entered into the riches of the gospel, coöperate with God to give it effect upon them? And how shall they be moved to coöperate unless they understand Him in the Cross of His Son? God in Christ has proved to the utmost His mercy, and made it consistent; it now remains for the Church itself, in possession of the divine mercy, to pass on that grace to others. He who has no mercy to show may well doubt if he himself has received grace. The lamented Dr. A. J. Gordon used to say, "I have long since ceased to pray, 'Lord Jesus, have compassion on a lost world!' I remember the day and the hour when I seemed to hear the Lord rebuking such a prayer. He seemed to say to me, 'I have had compassion upon a lost world, and now it is for you to have compassion.'" If the sense of one's relations to Christ Himself, as disclosed in His Cross, will not impel him to show Christ's grace to the world, nothing will or can.

Then, quite apart from our duty to the heathen and their own deep need of the benefits of the mediation of Christ, is the reward which belongs to Christ for all His redeeming anguish. Every disciple that

has shared in the benefits of Christ's salvation, if it is properly apprehended, will do his utmost to bring honour to Him who at such travail of soul brought in everlasting righteousness for mankind. Let the words of a most devoted missionary, the Rev. Willis R. Hotchkis, of the Friends' Mission to East Africa, here speak for us: "Would God we could lose sight for a time of missionary organizations and every human agency, and could get one clear vision of Jesus Christ; then the whole problem of missionary finance and missionary workers would be settled. I do not ask you to pity the heathen, for pity is often a weak thing that spends itself in tears, and then forgets the object of it. But I do ask you, with all my heart, simply to treat Jesus Christ right. I submit to you the question: 'Is it right to receive the eternal life from those scarred hands, and then give Him only the spare change we happen to have left after we have supplied ourselves with luxuries? Is it right to receive heaven at the price which He paid and then give Him the odds and ends, the convenient service, the things that cost us little or nothing? The crumbs that fall from your laden table are not enough; they will not do to meet the need of the world that gropes in its ignorance, in its blindness, without God. You have no right to crucify the Lord Jesus Christ afresh upon the cross of your convenience.'" He who has discerned the values accruing to himself

through the judgment-death of Christ's cross must communicate those values to others, and so bring fresh honours to Christ, or else recrucify the Lord's Christ and put Him to a double shame.

It is in the confidence of finding the true basis for missionary appeal that I have in the foregoing chapters with much discrimination gone into this whole question of the atonement afresh. This is the *raison d'etre* of this book. In the last analysis my better relation to the heathen will be determined as I discover my true relation to the Cross of Christ. That cross needs to be better understood, and when understood at least in some such aspects of it as I have developed, I think one cannot fail to see what the purpose of the Redeemer is as between the Christian—every Christian—and that great multitude of the so-called "heathen" yet in utter darkness respecting God's mercy in Christ. It is that the Christian shall share in his Redeemer's gracious passion for the heathen world.

And yet having said all this in the interest of a true theoretic basis for the defense and propagation of missions, I do not forget that any apologetic which rests its case on mere intellectual grounds will prove abortive. It is quite possible for one to be personally neglectful of the heathen on any mere theory, assuming that one satisfies himself with such theory. The deeper need is for a glowing

experimental realization of God's attitude in the matter.

With such a conception of the surpassing grace of God in Christ as I have above set forth, other things being equal, there is more hope of awakening in men the spontaneous desire to coöperate with God than upon any other view of which I am aware. In the hope of such spontaneity on the part of the churches lies the promise of increased zeal for the salvation of the heathen. The presentation of a true view of the work of Christ's cross will be so pleasing to the Spirit of God that He will bless it; moreover, in itself it is adapted to rouse the spirit of coöperation. Out of a fresh experience of the grace of God the soul will say, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God!"

Says Dr. Jowett, of Birmingham, Eng., in a recent sermon touching this matter, "The cardinal element in spiritual knowledge is not a well-managed theology, but a religious experience. A well arranged theology may be like a herbalist's dry museum: a religious experience has about it the life and beauty and fragrance of 'a well-watered garden.' To have really known the gracious God is to have tasted and seen how gracious He is. . . . 'Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!' 'taste and see!' . . . the taster becomes the advertiser; the experimentalist becomes the herald; the disciple becomes the apostle. . . . Oh, I am not afraid of a broadened con-

ception of the love and grace of the Lord if only men are in the Lord's garden and live on His fruits. Every guest will be a missioner who will go out into the highways and hedges, intent on multiplying the guests, and the sphere of his enterprise will be as wide as the world. . . . What I do fear is that we should sing of a grace we have not known, and that we should present the soft rumour of an enervating love to lull us into moral and spiritual indolence. I am afraid of that merely theoretical and drugging conception of grace which makes us easy about the needs and perils of Nineveh. . . . He who has tasted the Lord, loves the race."

X

THE CHRIST OF THE CROSS THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS

And the desire of all nations shall come.—*Haggai* 2 : 7.

In the preceding chapter, I have spoken of the basis found in a true understanding of the work of Christ for a better apologetic for missions than has commonly prevailed. Such an apologetic is sorely needed. The ministry, first of all, needs it if it is better to instruct and lead the church; and the church needs it if it is properly to respond to a true ministry.

In this final chapter I wish further to accentuate the need the heathen especially have of the Message of the Cross for themselves, and to show how it satisfies all human needs, at the centre, as nothing else can. Haggai, one of the prophets of the Restoration, speaks of the Messiah as "the desire—or desirable things—of all nations." [1] Such, the Redeemer of the world in Himself certainly is, and He is so because He is a Redeemer from sin through His reconciling work. "For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and made higher than the heavens." [2] The

[1] Haggai 2 : 7. [2] Heb. 7 : 26.

scene in which the prophet foreviews the Messiah is connected with the rebuilt temple at Jerusalem, the centre of which was the sacrificial altar. The prophet hears the Lord say that in the divine course of dispensational events which were to find their climax in the coming of the Redeemer, "I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory[1] . . . the latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former,"—because the priestly Messiah Himself will honour it with His own sacrificial presence.

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews makes use of these prophetic words and affords us an inspired comment on their meaning, and with it he couples an earnest exhortation. He says: "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh, *for* if they escaped not when they refused Him that warned them on earth, much more shall not we escape who turn away from Him that warneth from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised saying, 'Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven.'"[2] The plain teaching here is that when in the fullness of time the Redeemer came to earth and to His Cross He came in an expression of Himself so final that no symbolic description of it less striking than a *shaking of the heavens*, as well as of the earth would suffice. In

[1] Haggai 2: 7–9. [2] Heb. 12: 25, 26.

other words, heaven itself holds no deeper reality than the reconciling work of Christ. The sum of the teaching of the entire epistle is that this is the substance of reality. The apostle plainly tells us: "And this word yet once more signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that have been made, that *those things which are not shaken—eternal things—may remain.*[1] A more emphatic declaration could not be made that in the manifestation historically afforded to the world in the person and work of the Christ of Calvary, as interpreted in Hebrews, God had spoken in religious ultimates—His last word—a word which nothing in the heavens above or the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, can ever unsettle; that is, "the desire of all nations" is Christ in the work of His Cross.

On such a ground, no less urgent an exhortation could follow than this: "Wherefore receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace whereby we may offer service well pleasing to God with reverence and awe: for our God is a consuming fire."[2] Responding to so final a Kingdom, our answer must be reciprocal and real, or the fire of God's final judgment will reveal our religion to be but dross and refuse.

And yet ultimate as redemption is in its nature, it is likewise the most primary lesson that could be taught the world. The Christ of the Cross is both

[1] Heb. 12 : 27. [2] Heb. 12 : 28, 29.

the "first and the last."[1] There have always been those who have maintained that in order best to evangelize barbarous peoples, it would be wiser first to try and civilize them. Probably a more mistaken judgment respecting Christianity and its native power has never been expressed. Breaking down superstition, by no means, insures the introduction of vital religion. Indeed, as a rule, where superstition has by any sort of influence been shaken in the minds of human beings, the first result is usually complete atheism or agnosticism; the soul finding itself bereft of its superstitious dependence flies to the other extreme and loses confidence in all religion whatsoever. In the process of recovering heathen peoples from superstitious systems on the whole, doubtless stages of agnosticism intervene and sometimes long prevail; but this is chiefly because supplanting agencies are mainly secular: and in themselves have no spiritually vitalizing power; for example, British politics in India, and western science in Japan. One form of error is simply displaced by another form, or by secondary half-truths, which are often quite as deadly in their first effect. The grace of God as revealed in the Cross of Christ is itself a supreme, a positive and vitalizing energy. It is in itself adapted to make a way for itself and for everything else that is good. It requires no preliminary action upon the soul.

[1] Rev. 1:17.

With peoples most barbaric, the imagination is usually a vastly more potent influence upon personality than reason or prudential considerations or abstract notions. Accordingly, when the gospel itself is presented, it so shines in its own light and so rouses attention by its own original and superhuman novelty that it blazes a path for itself.

Some of the most devoted and heroic of missionaries, we regret to say, from one cause or another, have fallen into the error to which we have just referred, of supposing that something other than the gospel is first needed to prepare the way for the gospel to take effect. This was the great mistake of Hans Egede, the Moravian missionary to Greenland. Probably a more earnest and devoted soul than Egede never wrought for any people; yet he entertained the mistaken theory that civilization must precede Christianity. He thus states his conception in his own words: "It is a matter which cannot be questioned that if you will make a Christian out of a mere savage and wild man, you must first make him a reasonable man, and the next step will be easier . . . else it would be the same imprudence as to throw good seed into thorns and briars which would choke the seed." He laboured in Greenland for fifteen years with scarcely any tangible results. At length he felt compelled to quit Greenland and return to Denmark, his native land; so in shattered health taking the

cherished remains of his wife who had died in the work, he returned to Copenhagen. The King of the Realm gave him an audience, and conferred on him the title of Bishop of Greenland. Yet when Egede left Greenland, he was so dispirited that his farewell sermon was based upon the text: "Then I said, I have laboured in vain; I have spent my strength for naught, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord and my work with my God."[1] Of course this work was not a failure, as some would say of it, erroneous as his method was, for the mission and its fruits have continued to this day. The workers, however, who succeeded Egede in Greenland wrought more wisely, and those who began with the simple story of the Cross of Christ, with its matchless pathos, simplicity and power were the men who exemplified the fact that the Holy Spirit in modern times, as on the day of Pentecost, sets his seal upon the preaching of "Christ and Him crucified" in all its elemental simplicity, quite irrespective of any particular philosophy of religion as such.

When two years after Egede had left Greenland, John Beck, his successor, went to the same field and began at once to tell the story of the Saviour's agony in the garden, that seed found lodgment in the heart of a savage by the name of Kajarnak, and although overgrown and checked with thorns and briars of

[1] Isa. 49 : 4.

barbarism, immediately the good seed germinated. This stolid savage became a most earnest evangelist and the work of the gospel soon rooted itself in Greenland's soil.

Dr. A. J. Gordon used to tell of a great gospel triumph under the Moravian missionaries at Hopedale in Labrador. One day in 1804, as a missionary was preaching from the text, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," [1]—the words took strong hold of a wretched, vicious woman, so despised that she was shunned even by her degraded countrymen. This woman came under such conviction of sin that, filled with anguish on its account, she would go and spend nights in kennels occupied by the dogs, feeling unworthy to associate with human beings. At length, however, believing the great word of the preacher she had heard, she entered into peace, began to praise the Saviour in exultant strains, and as with a live coal from the altar, she fired the whole community in which she lived. Numerous huts began to resound with song and prayer, and the chapels could not contain the numbers who flocked to hear the testimony of salvation. Thus a real Pentecost in Labrador was wrought, kindled by a single text centering in the cross.

Indeed, the Moravian missionaries [illegible] a class, from

[1] Luke 19 ; 10.

Zinzendorf down have always put their peculiar emphasis upon the vivid and simple presentation of the Christ of the cross. Says Rev. Paul DeSchweinitz, Secretary of the Moravian Board of Missions, of Bethlehem, Penn., "The Moravian brethren, dwelling as they ever have upon Christ and Him crucified, as the chief theme of their preaching both to civilized and savage sinners, and making Christ's actual sufferings the spur to all their activity, have fastened upon the great prophecy of the suffering Messiah as their incentive to foreign mission work." It was because the Lord made the Redeemer's "soul an offering for sin" that "He shall see His seed; He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand! He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. . . . *Therefore*, will I divide Him a portion with the great and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; *because* He poured out His soul unto death and was numbered with the transgressors: and bare the sins of many and maketh intercession for the transgressors."[1] In these realities the Moravians found their missionary battle-cry: "To win for the lamb that was slain, the reward of His sufferings!" Under such incentives, their missionaries were ready, if need be, to become slaves among the negroes of the West Indies; to go joyfully to the ice-girt coasts of Greenland, Labrador

[1] Isa. 53: 10–12.

and Alaska; to count their lives not precious among the braves of the American forests; to go fearlessly into the pestilential swamps of Surinam and lay down their lives by scores: this it was that urged them forth to the degraded Hottentots and the fierce Kaffirs of Africa and to the scarce human Papuans of Australia; that sent them to the revolting lepers of Palestine, and to the most uncouth heathen at the uttermost extremities of the earth. All these services, devotions and sacrifices, the Moravians have regarded as the due reward of the Saviour's travail, and of course those same travails which have so mightily moved them, have been made the burning ground-theme of their messages to the heathen, and in all this they have furnished a shining example to the universal church of God.

In this also we are glad to say Christian missions generally have emulated the Moravians and with results most significant.

In the course of mission work in one of the Tahiti Islands, an aged chief hearing impressively presented the fact that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,"[1] rose up amid a crowd of natives and running his fingers through the long locks of his white hair and lifting them up over his head exclaimed: "Do you see those white locks? Once these locks were as black as the

[1] 1 Tim. 1 : 15.

wing of a raven: now they are as white as snow, and I have waited all these years to *hear words like these.*"

It is the testimony of Rev. Henry Richards of Banza Manteke in the Congo State, that after labouring for about seven years with the Africans, pressing upon them the holy character of God, the Ten Commandments, and in every way trying to bring them to an acknowledgment of sin, all seemed a failure. His wife had gone home to England broken in health, and he himself was about to give up in despair. He was moved however to expound the Gospel of Luke to the natives. He went through it stage by stage. When he came to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, there occurred an effect which nothing before had produced. Mr. Richards said: "You say you are not sinners? There is Jesus dying for you: He never did any wrong, but died for your sins and mine." Then, says Mr. Richards: "I could see that the Holy Spirit was convicting these hitherto impervious Congoese." The dispirited missionary learned his new lesson, and from then until now Mr. Richards, depending on the Holy Spirit's ratification of the message of the Cross has proved an exceptionally effective soul-winner. Under the changed method the heathen confessed, with brokenness of heart, that they were lost in sin and began to give their hearts to Christ. From that time on, as "Christ and Him

crucified" was preached, converts multiplied until now more than 2,000 living converts are enrolled in the Banza Monteke Church, and the work has spread far outward and upward in the Congo Valley.

At the Ecumenical Conference in New York in 1900, the Rt. Rev. William Ridley of the Church Missionary Society of England, Bishop of Caledonia in the far west of Canada, gave most thrilling accounts of the power of the gospel among the stalwart Indians of the region in which he long had laboured. The opposition of the Indians at first to the gospel message, and to those who first became Christians, was such that a brute of a man once came and deliberately spit in the missionary's face, then knocked him down and kicked him ; but afterwards that very Indian came and clasped the missionary's feet and at length died in the faith of Christ,—a triumphant Christian. Once on a Saturday night these savages came to the chapel and bid the Christians cease their praying : tore up their Bibles, and when they would not promise to cease their worship, pulled down the church with axes and crow-bars, and when they found the tower to the church too strong to overthrow, they set fire to it. A young Christian remonstrated, inquiring :

"Shall we not fight for the house of God?" But an older Christian replied :

"No, Jesus never fought; He died; we will die rather than fight!"

The bishop added: "This was the beginning of the conversion of the strongest tribe on that coast."

The chief of the tribe afterwards told the bishop, —"From the night when we destroyed that church onward, I dreaded the Spirit of God: out on the ocean, or where the snow peaks looked out over the seas, there the Spirit of God followed me, and I was afraid, and when I hunted along those peaks, the Spirit of God hunted me and I was afraid."

Another man who one day was holding the end of a tape measure, measuring out the best site in the town to begin a new church, said to the bishop:

"Do you know that hand set fire to the church?"

I said, "No."

"And," continued the man, "until I heard the native preacher say that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin, I never had peace in my heart, but when I heard that my fear went away."

The bishop concluded his statement by saying:

"Although I know life in England and in India and in this country, I don't know brighter Christian communities than among those people, the Indians of British Columbia. We have a jail there, but it is the only decaying building, as there has been nobody in it for twelve years, and now we are going to turn it into a coal-house."

"When the new church was opened recently, there was a choir sweetly singing; there was a brass band in procession; the church was full, and when the offertory was made, it amounted to $1,344, in cash." Surely, the days of gospel miracles are not ended, but they are confined to those conditions wherein the miraculous gospel of Christ's sacrificial love is testified to in reality and power.

A missionary to the South Seas on one occasion was reading the third chapter of John's Gospel, when he came to the sixteenth verse, he was interrupted by one of the islanders.

"What words were those? Let me hear those words again." They were read once more.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life." [1] The man rose and excitingly demanded:

"Is that true? Can that be true? God so love the world when the world not love Him? God so love the world as to give His Son to die: can that be true?"

The verse was read again and again, and the wondering native burst into tears as the realization broke over him.

An athletic Kaffir, hearing some passages from the New Testament on the "wrath to come" [2] was filled

[1] John 3 : 16. [2] Matt. 3 : 7.

with deep distress. The missionary who was dealing with him then spoke to him of the crucified Saviour, and that through the efficacy of His death, all fear of the coming doom might be escaped. The man tremblingly answered:

"Sir, I am old and stupid: tell me that again;" and when the message was reiterated, the tears rolled down his cheeks and he became softened to the spirit of a child.

Nor are such evangelical results by any means confined to the mere barbaric types of mind. Both rude and cultured alike are touched by the disclosure of the miracle of God's grace in the cross of His Son.

The Russian nobleman, Baron Woldemar Uxküll, who has recently visited America, in a public account of his conversion, given in Boston and elsewhere, expressed the power with which the work of Christ's cross came to him in the following quaint terms:

"My first prayer was in October, 1890, in the night. I prayed,—'Oh, God, if you are there above, then show me the truth. I do not know if you are there above, but if you hear prayers, then show me the truth.' Then I went on reading the Gospel of St. John. The book was changed—a new light was in the book. My eyes were also changed—a new light was in my eyes to see things in the book. Jesus was so beautiful and Jesus was so great in my eyes

that I saw He was really more than a man. He was really the Son of God. Then the Spirit of the Lord began to teach me and to say, if He was the Son of God, how precious was His life and His blood that He gave for us! Oh, how precious, much more precious, the life and blood of this One than the life of all humanity together, because all humanity together are only creations, while He is the Creator. So His life and blood are worth so much more and His blood so precious. Then the sins of all men are paid and the debts of all men are paid. Then I thought, well, if the sins of all men are paid, then mine also are paid, and then came the joy,—the heavenly joy,—in my heart. And then began my life; before it was only death. But now came the real life and happiness: I was inexplicably happy with Jesus, and I know that my name has been written in the Book of Life and my sins are forgiven. Since then I have had many honeymoons with Jesus."

Of course, the value of this cross as a theme of preaching rises to its highest power when the habitual living of the preacher as one crucified with Christ puts its Amen to the message.

In a great address given by the Rt. Rev. M. S. Baldwin, D. D., Bishop of Huron, Canada, to the Student Volunteer Convention, held in Cleveland in 1898, the bishop spoke of some essential spiritual qualifications of the volunteer, and among other

points on which he dwelt with great impressiveness was this, that the missionary must bear the image of the Lord Jesus Christ and Him as crucified and risen again in his own life and character. Said the bishop in substance: "The most stupendous and irrefragable proof of the truth of Christianity is our Lord Jesus Christ Himself! It is the solitary grandeur, the sublime character, the divine teaching of this mysterious One, this sublime Christ, this effulgence of His Father's glory and the very image of His substance which we are to resemble: we are to be not like some glowing seraph who stands beside His throne, not like some archangel who flies to do His will; but like Him who is 'the chiefest among ten thousand'—'the altogether lovely.'[1] To preach effectively to the heathen, your character as well as your words have to be those of Jesus. Your words will be only weighty when the heathen see Christ shining out of you. Now, what was the appearance of Christ? St. John tells us in the Apocalypse that he saw our Lord when the heavens were opened, and that by the throne He stood—'*a Lamb as though it had been slain.*'[2] Now, we ourselves never saw a man who had been dead and was raised to life again; but when St. John saw our Lord He bore the marks as of one dead and alive again: He not only looked like a Lamb, but as a Lamb *that had been slain and was risen*

[1] Song of Sol. 5: 10, 16. [2] Rev. 5: 6.

to life again. How many of us look like those who have died and been buried? What the world sees too often in us is the old, unslain natural life, and, unsatisfied, they turn away and say: 'Is this Christianity?' That which impresses men when they see and hear us is the *human;* what impressed men when they saw and heard Christ was the *divine.* Why this difference? Because in us the cross-principle is wanting. What the world needs to see, what the heathen need to see, is a man absolutely dead to the mind of the flesh—a man who will give good for evil, a blessing for a curse, a prayer for a blow."

At a certain crisis in the experience of Robert Moffat in South Africa, a chief, with about a dozen of his attendants, one day came to the mission house with fierce threatenings, and quivering spears in hand, to threaten the life of Moffat and his co-workers. The chiefs had regarded the presence of the missionaries the cause of a serious drought that had come upon the land, and they were ready to pierce Moffat to the death on the spot. Mr. Moffat was repairing his wagon at the front of his door. Mrs. Moffat, with a babe in her arms, was watching the crisis. Moffat remonstrated with the natives,—"We have indeed pitied your poor people in this time of drought, and we are truly sorry for you, but you know not what you threaten. We have come to teach and help and bless you; we have suffered from

your unfriendliness, but we have scarcely considered it persecution. We came prepared to expect some trials. If you are resolved to rid yourselves of us, you must resort to stronger measures, for our hearts are with you." The missionary stood erect and fearless; then throwing open his waistcoat, baring his breast, Moffat said: "Now drive your spears to my heart, if you will, and when you have slain me, my companions will have more light as to what to do." On hearing these words, the chief looked at his companions, remarking, with a significant shake of the head, "These men must have ten lives when they are so fearless of death; there must be something in immortality." Hereupon the opposition ceased, and the mission went on with new blessing and power. Men may doubt our arguments and dispute our conclusions; but they will believe in us if we have been dead with Christ and live again in Him. It is this miracle in our life for which the heathen wait, and, when in this power we go forth on His errand, people will say: "These men look like those who have died indeed unto sin and risen again unto righteousness, like the Christ of the cross and the resurrection." We are to stand in the witness-box and give this sort of a testimony, and, if we do, the case will be won.

But how different from all this the attitude of the so-called "modern mind"—a mind so secularized in

habit, that the divine seems largely to have vanished. As over against the New Testament conception of Christian life and service being a testimony *to* Christ on the one hand and a testimony *of* the indwelling Christ on the other, the over-confident mind not content to accept the divine task of a "witness" would fain be court, jury, advocate, sheriff and executioner in one. This mind affects the temper of self-sufficiency with no place left for God anywhere: its voice is like that of the Babel builders; it says, "go to, *let us make*" instead of being in subjection to the divine voice, when it commands: "Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house into a land that I will show thee and *I will make of thee* a great nation, etc." [1]

Great reactions at times will set in against certain theological statements of Christianity. Yet so long as the hymns of the church remain, that which is central to it can never be totally or permanently eclipsed. This is because the hymns express truth as experienced—the spirit rather than the letter of truth. A hymn signal in such undying power is the famous *Dies Iræ*, which filled with striking and startling imagery and sublimity true to Scripture and experience, has won for itself a place altogether unique in sacred verse. This hymn is technically a part of the Romish missal to be used in a special service for the

[1] Gen. 12: 2.

dead. Although it issued from an age of great superstition and corruption and from an unknown author, yet it represents salvation as from Christ alone, the product of pure grace without a remnant even of the interposition of saints. Like the Imitation of Christ by Thomas à Kempis, this judgment hymn remains amid the accumulated mass of Romish errors and inventions as a pure monument of the truth. The theme of this hymn is the final judgment of mankind and the relation to it of that other judgment, Christ's redeeming work on the cross. Filled with the most awful and trumpet-like cadences resounding through the tombs of earth, seeming to rouse the sheeted dead to stand before the final bar; yet the hymn also abounds in the most tender and appealing appreciations of the adaptation of the crucified Christ as alone equal, to deliver from the woes of the last hour. Probably no piece of sacred verse in all literature has so commanded the admiration of the foremost minds as this judgment hymn: men as varied in their personalities and tastes as Schlegel, J. G. Fichte, J. G. Von Meyer, Chevalier Bunsen, Professor Tholuck, Goethe, Sir Walter Scott, Prof. Edwards A. Park, Dean Trench, William R. Williams; and musicians like Mozart, Cherubini and Hayden, have in turn been awed or melted by it. It is said that Mozart while writing his celebrated requiem founded on this poem, was wrought to such a pitch of excitement that

his end is supposed to have been hastened thereby. He certainly did not live fully to complete his task. This hymn Dr. Samuel Johnson who was fond often of reciting it, could never repeat to the end without bursting into a flood of tears. Especially the stanzas referring to Christ's work of interposition always moved him as nothing else ever did or could.

"Ah! what plea shall I be pleading,
Who for me be interceding,
When the just man help is needing?

"Oh, Thou king of awful splendour,
Of salvation free the sender,
Grace to me, all gracious, render!

"Jesus, Lord, my plea let this be,
Mine the woe that brought from bliss Thee:
On that day, Lord, wilt Thou miss me?

"Wearily for me Thou soughtest;
On the cross my soul Thou boughtest;
Lose not all for which Thou wroughtest!

"Vengeance, Lord, *then* be Thy mission;
Now, of sin grant free remission,
Ere that day of inquisition."

Thus philosophers, saints, poets, musicians and masters of literature, learning and theology, as well as barbarians and heathen alike have ever responded to the redemption-note sounding from Calvary.

Our plea is that preachers of the gospel in politest

circles, and missionaries on heathen frontiers alike, should recover this lost note, and employ it with the endless variations in form possible to the mind and heart yet to be mastered by it. They must so return or quit claim to the Spirit in that peculiar power that attended the sermon of Peter on the natal day of the church; for this is the one theme that appeals alike to sage and savage. This is also the note which the Holy Spirit peculiarly blesses. There is no evidence in the New Testament that any soul who heard the sermon on the Mount repented under it, foundational as an epitome of moral law though it was. When however on the day of Pentecost, Peter brought home to the crucifiers of Jesus, the deicide in their sin, and the overruling grace of God in respect to it, assuring his hearers of pardon on the ground of what God meant in the gift of His Son, three thousand people were pricked in their hearts and with broken spirits turned to Him. This is God's way of securing a "repentance which bringeth no regret."[1]

Recently a steamship in mid-ocean equipped with wireless telegraphic instruments received communications almost simultaneously from both sides of the Atlantic. The secret of this mysterious power is that the communicating apparatus is so mutually attuned that there is reciprocation between the instrument in mid-ocean and the receivers or transmitters on either

[1] 2 Cor. 7 : 10.

shore. And so he who takes his stand on Calvary and is keyed to its dominant note will wake a response sooner or later from every variety of human heart. The sinner indeed may unstring his harp, turn the divinely intended harmony to discord and fail to respond, but if so, no other note than that from Calvary can ever savingly reach him.

"For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries." [1]

Would that the day were here when no candidate for a foreign mission field will be encouraged by his religious teachers—much less by any mission board—to go out to the heathen as a missionary, who has not seen the fact of the reconciling cross to be so central in the Bible that he will make it the very core of his message, and who has not personally experienced such a power of that cross over His own heart and imagination, as will be ever with Him. This should be in principle His first and last word, the Alpha and the Omega of all His preaching and teaching. If all would do so, the coming of the golden age of missions would be hastened by centuries. The human heart-ache is for this balm; the sigh and groan of the whole creation is for this panacea. The man who goes with

[1] Heb. 10:26, 27.

any lesser theme upon his tongue has misconceived his supreme errand as an exponent of Christ and His commission.

The tendency in our times is to put great emphasis upon the study of comparative religion,—a study in itself of much value; but we fear the place given to it in thought often carries with it an implication that the primary and principal battle to be fought on heathen fields is an intellectual battle or else a compromise. Doubtless the more intelligent the missionary is respecting the character of various religions with which he has to come in contact, the better. On intellectual grounds Christianity can justify its claims to be the altogether unique, peerless and sufficient religion revealed from heaven. But it is not in mere discussion of the comparative merits of Christianity and other systems as they may be argued in dogmatic contests that the efficiency of Christian propagandism lies. Such contests are far more likely either to awaken antagonism and pride for partisan victory or to make harmful concessions to error than to meet the vastly deeper needs of the soul. With all one's intelligence respecting Vedas and Shastras, respecting Confucius and Mahomet, Buddha and Shinto, let the young missionary hold his learning of mere philosophies as such in the background. Dr. John A. Broadus, one of the wisest teachers of young ministers that ever adorned a professor's chair in this

country, used to give this advice to his ministerial students, "*Read Butler* and *preach* to the *negroes.*" I fear not infrequently a fledgling from the seminary goes out to the mission field with a smattering of comparative religion, involving some rose-coloured views of Buddhism and Brahminism derived from anything but the realities of the systems as they practically exist, and with superficial self-consciousness spends too much time *preaching* "Butler, while *misreading* the negroes" : thus subverting the counsel of the sage professor.

The saving message must ever be "Christ and Him crucified." The missionary's central relation to the heathen should be determined by what is central in divine Revelation, namely the Lamb of God, foreknown, foreordained, in purpose slain, before the foundation of the world. In the last analysis everything turns on this.

The Revelation of St. John, whatever may be said respecting its principle of interpretation, is unquestionably the climacteric message of the Bible. It represents the all-glorious dénouement of the redemptive work of Christ. At the very heart of this revelation in the fifth chapter, we have an apotheosis of the work of Christ. In various symbolic forms the Redeemer, the Lamb of God "slain," but now "alive forevermore," [1] is pictured to us in

[1] Rev. 1 : 18.

closest relation to the throne of the Eternal, and also to the saved Church. There is a composite presentation of the realities involved. The elements in this picture are as follows:

"A book written within and on the back, close sealed with seven seals." This book or roll "in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne" [1]—that is, in the place of privilege, the place of power. In the midst of the throne what are called "four living creatures," surrounded by the elders.[2] These living creatures apparently the fourfold expression of the glorified humanity in Christ, in consonance with the idea of the cherubim, in Genesis and Ezekiel. In the midst of all is the Lamb as one "who had been slain";[3] but now living again, having "horns" of power and "eyes" for insight. This Lamb, by intentional mixture of figures, is presented as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah";[4] although a Lamb. His distinctive power resides in the fact that by blood He "hath *overcome*" to open the mysterious book which no one in the universe but He could unseal, and thus the overcoming Lamb takes the roll out of the hand of Him that sat on the throne, the glorified humanity, and begins to unseal it, the eldership of the redeemed church, meanwhile, falling down before this victorious Lamb, with "harps"

[1] Rev. 5:1.
[2] Rev. 5:6.
[3] Rev. 5:6.
[4] Rev. 5:5.

and golden bowls full of the incense of the prayers of the saints."[1] It is a majestic picture of the centrality of the Redeemer's reconciling work.

On view of this scene, the heavenly worshippers burst into "a new song."[2] The redeemed church exclaims: "Worthy art Thou to take the book and to open the seals thereof: *for Thou wast slain and didst purchase unto God with Thy blood* men of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests, and they reign upon the earth."[3] Then the redeeming work of Christ all centres in the purchasing value of the Redeemer's blood, or sacrificial life.

Next, plainly heard by the ear of the divine seer, there follows "a voice of ten thousand times ten thousands, and thousands of thousands of angels round about the throne, and they exclaim: "*Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive* the power and riches and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing."[4] Nor is this all: every created thing which is in the heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, add their refrain, "Unto Him that sitteth on the throne *and unto the Lamb be the blessing* and the honour and the glory and the dominion forever and ever."[5]

[1] Rev. 5:8. [2] Rev. 5:9. [3] Rev. 5:9, 10.
[4] Rev. 5:11, 12. [5] Rev. 5:13.

To this full diapason, composed of the new song of the redeemed, the adoration of angels, and the tribute of the whole creation, the glorified humanity, expressed in the four living creatures and the eldership of the redeemed church add their emphatic "*amen*"; and so the sinless worship of the eternities begins.

Now, all this dénouement in the climacteric book of the Bible is entirely in consonance with the thought with which the Bible starts, and the principle which is at the basis of this discussion of the age-long reconciliation, that redemption which is an eternal thing.

The Revelation is the simple apotheosis of the meaning and the message of the Lamb "foreknown—even slain—before the foundation of the world."[1] In its thought, the ideal city is the "bride, the Lamb's wife."[2] "The lamp thereof is the Lamb."[3] In the twelve foundations of the city are "the twelve names of the Apostles of the Lamb."[4] "The Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof."[5] They only become its citizens which are "written in the Lamb's book of life."[6] And their eternal refreshment and joy is "a river of water of life bright as crystal proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."[7] Thus from eternity past

[1] Rev. 13 : 8. [2] Rev. 21 : 9. [3] Rev. 21 : 23.
[4] Rev. 21 : 14. [5] Rev. 21 : 22. [6] Rev. 21 : 27.
[7] Rev. 22 : 1.

to eternity future this dominant note sounds in the universe of God. It cannot stand for less than the sum of all the realities in the universe. It cannot be otherwise than that the whole world stands in need of it.

It should be the joy of the church universal to sound it forth until "the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever." [1]

"'Tis finished—the Messiah dies
For sins, but not His own;
The great redemption is complete,
And Satan's power o'erthrown.
'Tis finished—Legal worship ends,
And gospel ages run;
And old things now are past away
And a new world begun."

[1] Rev. 11 : 15.

APPENDIX

I HERE record a more extended account of the personal experience referred to on page 153. While on general principles, the details of such experiences may have but a relative worth, yet inasmuch as the sympathetic personal element is often a helpful factor in communicating truth, there may be a value in a concrete personal testimony respecting the limits of subjective experience.

At a certain juncture in my ministerial life, after a prolonged period of nervous break-down and depression, I was at length forced to a crisis which nothing seemed able to avert. All the foundations of faith were slipping from under me, and it seemed inevitable that I must abandon that very course of life into which all the antecedents of previous years had appeared to lead. The unity of life was broken, and I could not be reconciled to it. It was like giving up my Isaac, in whom for me the very hope of service to the Kingdom of God centred.

This child of promise surrendered, it seemed as if I must go away into some obscure corner and despair. In my prolonged struggle against God's providential intent in my life, I had unconsciously grown legalistic in habit of mind, and morbid and heart-broken

with disappointed feeling. At length, however, deliverance came in a way altogether unexpected. It came through the acceptance of God's providential ultimatum for me, whatever it might involve. The distressing factors in my life I must accept purely on grounds of the divine will for me, a will which I could no more buffet than I could understand. These factors were objective in the actualities of my life, and as I thought upon it I recalled how God Himself had declared in terms of objective Divine revelation that "all things work together for good to them that love Him," that is, "to those who are in a filial spirit towards Him," even though no explanation of His trying providential dealings with one are given. In other words: I was thrust back on a first principle underlying all Christian experience. I must submit to God's objective terms for my life, even at the cost of dying to self-preference, trusting God again to make alive.

The critical moment when that abandonment had to be made drew on. As I went to seek an elder brother's[1] sympathy and prayers in the crisis, I felt like an ox driven to the shambles. I saw a certain end of all my dearest prospects, even of usefulness as a servant of God. I was going to self-confessed failure; to hopeless wreck. It was inevitable, but I

[1] That of my friend Dr. Arthur T. Pierson then pastor near me in Indianapolis.

pushed on blindly, driven as if by some dread fatality. At length I bowed in prayer before the God I could not see. Like another Jacob at the Jabbok, my wrestling thigh was disjointed; my heart was completely broken. Then it seemed as if the crust of the earth opened and I was swallowed up. I went down, ever down, to the centre, when lo! in utter surprise, in that Plutonian depth I awoke to find that I was in the bosom of God! I was at once at peace, and in the realization of a Divine love I had never before known. I saw God face to face. In its light everything seemed changed. I was at once lifted into a great fellowship with the Heavenly One, and for months afterwards, was in a transport of joy. And I was drawn back to the closest study of and communion with the Bible. My habitual—I dare not say constant—Godward relations became radically altered. I saw doctrinally the principle that dying with Christ and living again, is of the essence of spiritual life. It is this principle in Ritschl's thought which I doubt not has captivated many who have personally tasted it and which they have tried to state in a new theological form. But there is grave danger here which all do not perceive; namely, the danger that the experience in itself will be mistaken for a permanent abiding place, instead of the gateway to broader realms of objective worth. There are worths thus realized as expressed by Ritschl in what

he calls "judgments of value" or "worth judgments," but after all, the worths of supreme value thus laid hold of are determined not so much by the intrinsic quality of one's own subjective exercises,—mere steps in a process,—as because *the objective realities outside the believer are there,* in the revealed grace of God ministered to us by the Holy Spirit the moment that in sheer desperation we seize upon them.

For a considerable period the experience to which I have above referred impressed itself upon my preaching, or rather teaching habit; I think unduly so. I found myself strongly drawn to presentations of such Scriptural events and truths as afforded corroboration of my own experience. I discovered corresponding experiences in the lives of Biblical saints from Abel to John of Patmos and I made large use of them. This habit was refreshing to my own heart, and I have reason to think was edifying to many of my hearers. At length, however, I awoke to another class of results, not so profitable to others. Many of the simpler minded people were confused, and some were oblivious altogether of what I was driving at; and my ministry on one side of its function correspondingly suffered. In short, I discovered that unwittingly I had again been overlooking the objective in the realm of truth, and the lack of converting power in my messages to the impenitent was apparent. Accordingly I was constrained to feel my way

back to a larger and better understood objective, which for the time had become jeoparded for after all, the crisis to which I had given such value was itself but an occasion for helping me to grasp further objective revealed truths in the Holy Scriptures as the Divine Spirit, who indited those Scriptures, brought me into deeper relation to the enduring realities.

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